ARMY RESERVE MAGAZINE

SUMMER 2006

THE ARMY RESERVE FAMILY

Family Programs Support the Home Front

Army Reserve Recruiting Gets a Boost

Virtual University Gives Soldiers More Training Time

SUPPORT
OUR TROOPS

ARMY RESERVE MAGAZINE

Since 1954.

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ON THE COVER

SSG James Smith is greeted by his wife, Wilma and their eight-month son, Malik during homecoming ceremonies for his unit, the 257th Transportation Company, Las Vegas, Nev. The Army Reserve Soldiers were greeted by more than 500 friends and family members at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev.

(PHOTO: AIRMAN 1ST CLASS DANIAL DECOOK, USAF)

Also on the cover: The yellow ribbon symbolizes our commitment to honoring those of our Army Reserve Soldiers who have fallen, those who are missing and those who are serving around the globe. It will appear on each issue until they all come home.

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BACK COVER

SSG Russell Cotton confers with an Iraqi platoon leader while on a combat patrol in Talafar, Iraq. He was part of the Coalition Military Assistance Training Team training the Iraqi Armed Forces. Cotton is a member of the 75th Division, an Army Reserve unit headquartered in Houston, Texas. (PHOTO: U.S. ARMY)

SUBMISSIONS · *Army Reserve Magazine* invites articles, story ideas, photographs and other material of interest to members of the U.S. Army Reserve. Manuscripts and other correspondence for the editor should be addressed to Commander, U.S. Army Reserve Command, Attn: Public Affairs (ARM), 1401 Deshler Street, SW, Fort McPherson, GA 30330-2000, telephone 404-464-8500 or dsn 367-8500. All email submissions should go to usarcmag@usar.army.mil. All articles ***must*** be submitted electronically or on disk or CD. Unsolicited manuscripts and photographs will not be returned. Query by letter.

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News Briefs

NEW CAR GETS THIRD STAR

By Al Schilf
OCAR Public Affairs Office

WASHINGTON D.C. — The Chief of Staff of the Army, GEN Peter J. Schoomaker, promoted MG Jack C. Stultz to the rank of Lieutenant General, in a ceremony at the Pentagon courtyard May 31, 2006. LTG Stultz became Chief, Army Reserve, and Commanding General, U.S. Army Reserve Command on May 25, 2006 after serving as the Command's Deputy Commanding General since October 2005.

Schoomaker noted that Stultz was taking command during a challenging time, "at a time when we are at war, and we are transforming the Army for the future." He emphasized Stultz's experience, having been deployed to serve in Desert Storm, the Balkans, and Iraq. And he indicated that in Stultz and his wife, Lauralyn Brown, "We've got a great Army couple!"

Stultz stated that he is honored by the promotion, and humbled by the everyday efforts of the Army Reserve Soldiers he has been selected to lead. His final point was that he will continue to emphasize the Warrior Ethos that characterizes today's Army Reserve Soldier.

Prior to assignment to the Army Reserve Command, Stultz served as the commanding general of the 143rd Transportation Command, which provides command and control to 12 units in the southeast United States.

Stultz, a Desert Shield/Desert Storm veteran, deployed to the Balkans with the 257th Transportation Battalion in March, 1997, and deployed to Kuwait in October, 2002, as the commander of the 143rd Transportation Command (Forward), in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Moving into Iraq with the initial ground offensive, he established the first forward logistics hub at Tallil and initial rail operations at Garma, west of Baghdad. In October 2003 he was assigned as Director of Movements, Distribution and Transportation, Combined Forces Land Component Command Kuwait. In this role Stultz was responsible for the movement of sustainment supplies for US and Coalition forces in Kuwait and Iraq. From January to August 2004, he was responsible for port and ground transportation operations for the largest movement of forces since World War II.

Stultz is a graduate of the Command and General Staff College and Army War College. His awards and decorations include the Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Bronze Star (w/1 Oak Leaf Cluster), Meritorious Service Medal (w/3 Oak Leaf Clusters), Army Commendation Medal (w/ 4 Oak Leaf Clusters) & the Army Achievement Medal.

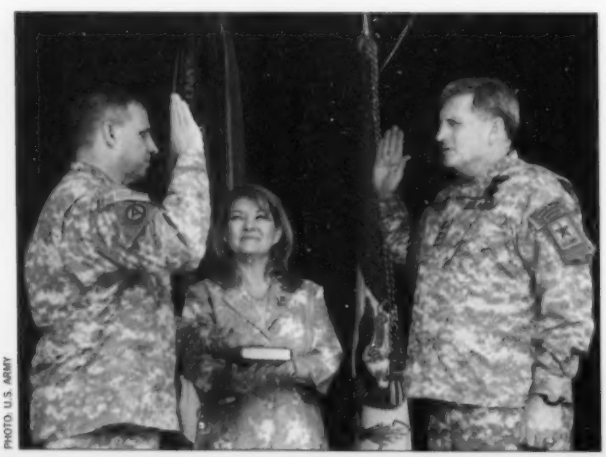


PHOTO: U.S. ARMY

GEN Peter J. Schoomaker (R), chief of staff of the Army, administers the oath of office to LTG Jack C. Stultz 9 (L) as his wife, Lauralyn Brown, holds the bible.

PHOTO: PAUL ADAMS

GEN Dan K. McNeill, commander, U.S. Army Forces Command presents LTG James R. Helmly with the Distinguished Service Medal as Mrs. Maria Helmly looks on.

RELINQUISHING OF COMMAND CEREMONY HELD FOR LTG HELMLY

By Chuck Prichard
Army Reserve Public Affairs

FORT McPHERSON, Ga. — LTG James R. Helmly relinquished command as chief of the Army Reserve/commanding general of the United States Army Reserve Command May 19, 2006 at a ceremony held at Hedekin Field, Fort McPherson, Ga.

MG Jack C. Stultz, deputy commanding general, U.S. Army Reserve Command, was confirmed by the Senate May 19, 2006 for the appointment to the grade of lieutenant general with assignment as the new Chief, Army Reserve/ Commanding General U.S. Army Reserve Command.

The ceremony marked the end of the four-year tenure of Helmly, who assumed command of the Army Reserve in May 2002. During Helmly's tour of duty, Army Reserve Soldiers answered the call for a myriad of missions ranging from homeland defense to disaster relief to Operation Iraqi Freedom and other operations related to the Global War on Terrorism. Helmly's legacy to the Army Reserve includes the most comprehensive restructuring in the organization's history.

Helmly has moved on to his next assignment where he serves as the chief of Central Command's Office of Defense Representative-Pakistan.

ARMY RESERVE SOLDIERS REAFFIRM COMMITMENT TO DUTY AT U.S. CAPITOL CEREMONY

By Chuck Prichard
Army Reserve Public Affairs

Washington, D.C. — Forty Citizen Soldiers from all walks of life reaffirmed their commitment to the Army Reserve April 6, 2006 by participating in a reenlistment ceremony on the steps of the U.S. Capitol. The Soldiers are the first participants in the Army Reserve's Reenlistment Recognition Program.

LTG James R. Helmly, Chief, Army Reserve, addressed a question some might ask of the participants. "I'm sure there are those who want to know why, in such turbulent, challenging, dangerous times as these, would anyone reenlist into the Army; why these Americans, facing deployment to a war zone — some for the second or third time — are willing to raise their right hands and renew their oath of enlistment."

"Why, you ask? Because they are answering America's Call to Duty! It is a call that summons forth their sense of duty, honor, courage. I tell you that Americans, such as these, have been answering that call for over 230 years by serving in our Army," Helmly said. The ceremony was held to highlight the positive reenlistment trend among Army Reserve Soldiers. In fiscal year 2005, reenlistments by Army Reserve Soldiers reached 101.5 percent of the goal.

"This is a great opportunity to showcase Soldiers who have elected to continue their service to the nation, said MAJ Chris Gerdes, current operations officer with the Army Reserve Retention and Transition Division.

The Soldiers selected for the ceremony reflected the diversity of the Army Reserve ranks. The group included a teacher, a youth pastor, a computer technician, a police officer, a retail representative and a student.

Many of the Soldiers are veterans of Operation Iraqi Freedom, to include some Bronze Star and Purple Heart recipients.

The ceremony was particularly meaningful for SFC Juanita Wilson, who lost her left hand to an improvised explosive device while serving in Iraq in 2004.

"It is my dream and desire to stay in the Army. I've been in combat and have knowledge I can pass onto other Soldiers," said Wilson.

After being treated for her injury at Walter Reed Hospital, Wilson was offered the opportunity to work there. She now serves as a supply sergeant in the Active Guard and Reserve program.

"I am most proud of being a woman in combat. I want my 7 year-old daughter to know I never give up," said Wilson. While Wilson's reenlistment was driven by determination, fierce patriotism inspired another Soldier to participate in the ceremony.

"I want to wear the uniform. I am an extreme patriot. My husband is active duty. We are both committed," said SSG Magdalena Rodriguez, of Hinesville, Ga. She is currently mobilized with the 87th Training Division at Fort Stewart, Ga., preparing Soldiers for deployment.

Later this month Rodriquez will participate in another important ceremony. At that event she will raise her hand and become a U.S. citizen. "I understand the price of freedom," said Rodriquez, who was born in Poland.

SGT Joshua Frey, Cleveland, Ohio, had a more simplistic reason to continue his service with the 762nd Transportation Company, headquartered in Canton, Ohio. "I want to help mold the younger Soldiers in my unit," said Frey, who was deployed to Kuwait and Iraq from January 2003 to May 2004.

SOLDIERS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE CEREMONY WERE:

SGT Katherine Ahlrichs, Kenosha, Wis.
SGT Koley Anthony, Garland, Texas.
SGT Jessica Carino, Lawton, Okla.
SGT John Conklin, Fayetteville, N.C.
SGT Aaron Coplan, Kelso, Wash.
SSG Bach Dang, Harvey, La.
SGT Mark Dey, Rochester, N.Y.
SGT Matthew Erickson, Page, N.D.
SSG Daniel Fairfield, El Paso, Texas.
SGT Joshua Frey, Cleveland, Ohio
SPC Polo Fruean, Pago Pago, American Samoa
SSG Sabrina Gouthier, Columbia, S.C.
SGT Cordon Green, Waldorf, Md.
SSG Eric Herrera, who lives in Germany.
SGT Jake Hillier, Jacksonville, Fla.
SSG Steven Hopkins, Sandy, Utah.
SSG Shawn Hounschell, Monroe, Ga.
SGT Tarah Jackson, Richmond, Va.
SSG Aaron Knudson, Rockford, Ill.
SGT James Lindstrand, Sedrowolley, Wash.
SSG Ann Mais, Appleton, Wis.
SGT Omar Marquez, St. Just, Puerto Rico.
SPC Shawanda McNeil, Brooklyn N.Y.
SGT Jose Mendoza, Stellacoom, Wash.
SSG Jeffrey Olson, Wakeeney, Kan.
SGT Josefina Pozos, Pamona, Calif.
SPC Christopher Price. Lubbock, Texas.
SPC Nabori Ramirez, Everett, Mass.
SPC Adrian Rentas, Willingboro, N.J.
SPC Onellys Riveria-Nelson, La Gloriatrujilloalto, Puerto Rico.
SGT Daisy Robles, Monroeville, N.J.
SSG Magdalena Rodriguez, Hinesville, Ga.
SSG Tikeyla Ross, Dallas, Texas.
SSG Brigette Sebial, Hawthorne, Calif.
SGT David Taylor, Nashua, N.H.
SSG Jeremiah Ulrich, Elbow Lake, Minn.
SSG Nicholas Veal, Marietta, Ga.
SGT Ashley Westermann, Scribner, Neb.
SFC Juanita Wilson, Baltimore, Md.
SFC Darryl Zuchelli, Gadsden, Ala.

PHOTO: BRUCE HILL

LTC James R. Helmly, chief, Army Reserve, reenlists 40 Army Reserve Soldiers in the Army Reserve's Reenlistment Recognition Program.

As a truck driver for the 762nd, Frey's main job during his deployment was to haul everything from toilet paper to artillery shells. But driving often took a backseat to security as Frey and his crew often found themselves providing coverage so that convoys could pass safely into and out of Baghdad International Airport. "I am proud to say that every Soldier that I went overseas with came home safely to their family," said Frey, who is a police officer in his civilian job.

During the ceremony the participating Soldiers were called forward individually so that Helmly could personally sign each of their contracts. To commemorate the occasion, each Soldier received a personal note from Helmly and a commander's coin in a leather display case.

After the ceremony the Soldiers were treated to a tour of the Washington area, visiting the Capitol Building, the National Mall, Arlington National Cemetery, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the Pentagon.

ARMY RESERVE LAUNCHES PROGRAM TO BOOST RECRUITING; SOLDIERS CAN RECEIVE $1,000 FOR REFERRALS

By LTC Mac Balatico, Office, Chief Army Reserve

Army Reserve Soldiers are now eligible for a $1,000 referral bonus through the Sergeant Major of the Army Recruiting Team program. The bonus will be paid to the Soldier making the referral only after the referral completes and graduates from Initial Entry Training (IET).

The referral bonus became effective Jan. 18, 2006.

The referral bonus became effective January 18, 2006. Eligibility for the $1,000 referral bonus requires that any Soldier submitting a referral be a member of the regular component of the Army, the Army National Guard (Selected Reserve) or Army Reserve (Selected Reserve), including AGR. A referral may elect to serve in any component of the Army (Active, Army Reserve or National Guard) and does not have to enter the same component as the Soldier making the referral.

Https://www.usarec.army.mil/smart/index.htm has details on the bonus program

Further details on the program are available at the following link: **https://www.usarec.army.mil/smart/index.htm**

For questions regarding the Referral Bonus Program, contact the USAREC program manager at 1-800-223-3735, extension 6-0473.

TRICARE DENTAL PROGRAM BEGINS NEW CONTRACT

FALLS CHURCH, Va. — TRICARE Management Activity began its new TRICARE Dental Program (TDP) contract with United Concordia Companies Inc. on Feb. 1, 2006. United Concordia will continue to furnish worldwide, comprehensive dental coverage to include preventive, diagnostic, restorative and maintenance services to all eligible Uniformed Services active duty family members and to National Guard and Reserve members and/or their eligible family members.

Under the new contract, TRICARE has added benefits to the dental program, including dental implants and related prosthetics, and extended restorative services to teeth affected by attrition, erosion, abrasion, and congenital or developmental defects. The TDP will continue to offer a comprehensive dental benefit package that includes dental X-rays, periodic examinations, cleanings, fluoride treatment, fillings, root canals, dental crowns and bridges, and orthodontics.

The TDP is an affordable and portable program that makes it easy to maintain good dental health. Eligible beneficiaries may enroll in single member plans or family plans. Beginning Feb. 1, 2006, through Jan. 31, 2007, the monthly single member enrollment premium for most eligible beneficiaries is $10.51 with the family premium as low as $26.27 per month. Specific information on enrollment, premium costs, and benefits can be found at **www.TRICAREdentalprogram.com**.

For more information to include enrollment, beneficiaries may access the TDP online at **www.TRICAREdental program.com**, or by calling toll-free 1-800-866-8499, 24 hours a day. Members residing outside the continental U.S. should dial their country code followed by 888-418-0466 (toll-free). Beneficiaries may also access the TRICARE Web site at **www.tricare. osd.mil** and the **TDP fact sheet**.

ARMY RESERVE CASTING FOR SOLDIERS' ADS, APPEARANCES

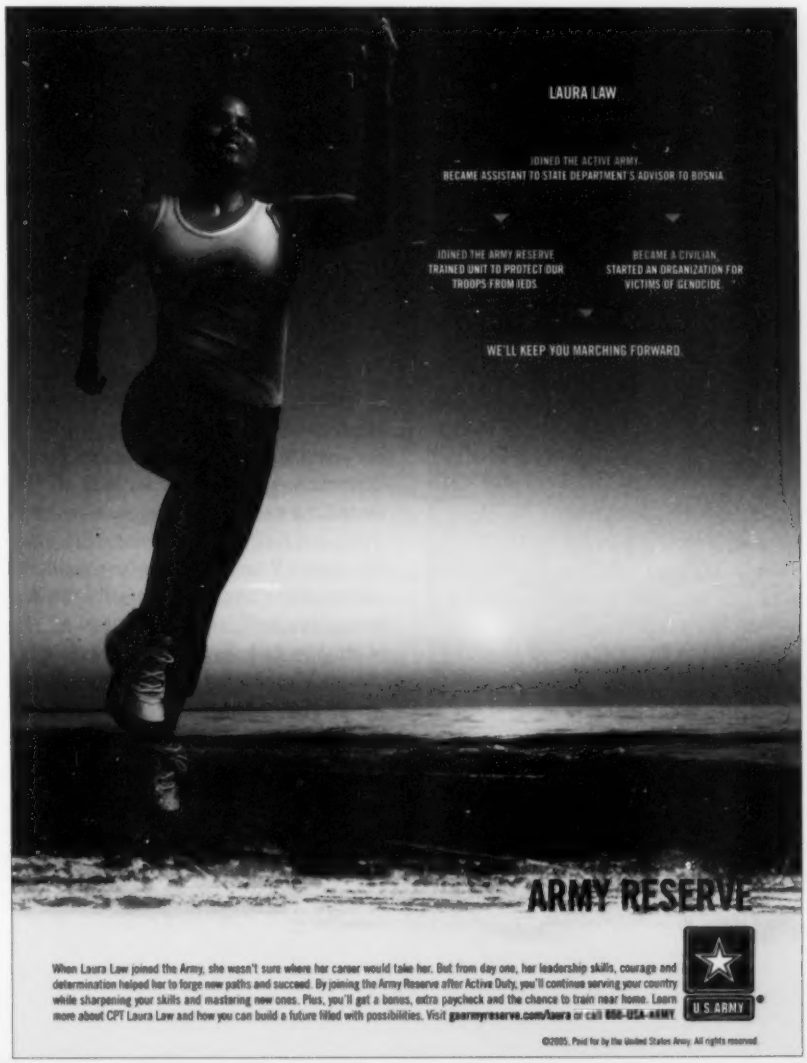
By MAJ Cheryl Phillips
Advertising and Marketing Office
U.S. Army Reserve

Here's your chance for 15 minutes of fame!

The Army Reserve is looking for Soldiers for recruiting ads, guest appearances and media interviews. If you have a good story to tell about your experiences as an Army Reserve Soldier and want to share it with others, we'd like to hear from you. Just go to **www.ArmyReserve.Army.mil/USAR/Soldiers** and click on the "Casting Call" link. Fill out the online questionnaire and submit it along with a recent photo.

Army Reserve Communications will keep your information on file and let you know when we need you for an advertisement, interview or appearance. If you're selected for a communications program, participation is optional and all travel expenses are paid by the Army Reserve. ARM

CPT Laura Law was selected for a communications program and appeared in an Army Reserve advertisement.


LAURA LAW
JOINED THE ACTIVE ARMY.
BECAME ASSISTANT TO STATE DEPARTMENT'S ADVISOR TO BOSNIA
JOINED THE ARMY RESERVE.
TRAINED UNIT TO PROTECT OUR TROOPS FROM IEDS
BECAME A CIVILIAN.
STARTED AN ORGANIZATION FOR VICTIMS OF GENOCIDE.
WE'LL KEEP YOU MARCHING FORWARD.
ARMY RESERVE
When Laura Law joined the Army, she wasn't sure where her career would take her. But from day one, her leadership skills, courage and determination helped her to forge new paths and succeed. By joining the Army Reserve after Active Duty, you'll continue serving your country while sharpening your skills and mastering new ones. Plus, you'll get a bonus, extra paycheck and the chance to train near home. Learn more about CPT Laura Law and how you can build a future filled with possibilities. Visit goarmyreserve.com/laura or call 888-USA-ARMY.
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Chief, Army Reserve Weighs In On

TRANSFORMATION

PHOTO: PAUL ADAMS

LTG Jack Stultz, Chief, Army Reserve, talks about the transformation of the Army Reserve.

Army Reserve Magazine staff members sat down with LTG Jack Stultz, Chief, Army Reserve, to get his view of a complex reorganization now taking place within the Army Reserve.

Army Reserve Magazine (ARM): Why do we have to transform?

LTG Jack Stultz (Stultz): We have been kept an Army with a Cold War structure while the threat has continued to change. We no longer face a Cold War superpower but rather the enemy that threatens us now is transnational. It is comprised of terrorist groups that reside in distant countries such as Iraq, Afghanistan, in our own hemisphere and within our own borders. That forces us to transform our Army to fight a Global War on Terrorism. The Army Reserve as an integral part of The Army must transform at the same time and at the same pace.

The Army Reserve used to be considered a strategic reserve focused force, the old paradigm of one weekend a month, two weeks in the summertime and, if World War III breaks out, we'll be called to respond. We would also have advance warning and plenty of time to mobilize and train before being expected to respond. The events of 2001 changed the playing field and the rules of the game. Since early 2003, we have had about 40,000 Army Reserve Soldiers mobilized ongoing in support of Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. The challenge is to maintain that level of support to the war on an enduring basis. To that end, we have no choice but to change our structure.

ARM: Earlier this year, a federal budget proposal recommended reducing the total number of Soldiers in the Army Reserve from 205,000 to 188,000. How does that factor into the current restructuring efforts?

Stultz: Congress authorizes the size of the Army, to include the Army Reserve and the National Guard. We are currently authorized an end strength of 205,000 personnel in the Army Reserve. Our current structure is about 220,000. We've got 15,000 more spaces than we are really authorized to man. People ask how we can do that. Well, we have created Table of Distribution and Allowance (TDA)-type organizations, like Regional Readiness Commands (RRCs) and other Headquarters, which are not part of the Modified Table of Equipment (MTOE) deployable force. That's additional structure that we created to take care of the force. As long as we don't fully man our structure at 220,000 then economically we are okay. The problem is that we have built a structure we can never fully man.

"What we are doing is restructuring spaces within the Army Reserve to put them into war fighting-type units." — LTG Jack C. Stultz

What we are doing now is taking a look at our 205,000 cap. At any given time we have about 20,000 Soldiers who are awaiting to go to school, are in school, are waiting to retire, are in some kind of medical hold situation or for some other reason are not available for the force. So if we have a structure of 205,000 we could never ever fully man it.

We are currently building for the Army Reserve a Trainees, Transients, Holdees and Students (TTHS) account. This is nothing new. The active Army has one. We'll use this account to hold the Soldiers who, for whatever reason, are not available to the units. So if we take our cap of 205,000 and take 20,000 from that (for the TTHS account), then we can build a structure of 185,000 that we should be able to fully man. That's where we are trying to head with our structure. We want to build a force that we can fully man instead of having a structure that is only ever 80 percent available.

ARM: How will the structure be changed?

Stultz: MTOE structure provides the units that get mobilized. We had to look at where we have non-MTOE structure — TDA structure — that we can transform into MTOE structure for units for deployment. Secondly, we had to look at where we have MTOE structure that we are not using for the war.

The active Army is doing the same thing. For example, they have determined that they don't need as many artillery units. They are in the process of transforming some of the artillery units to military police or other types of units that are in short supply. We are doing the same thing on the Reserve side.

The major initiative right now involves transforming the RRC structure. We have 10 RRCs that have done a miraculous job of preparing units for mobilization and providing base operations support for those units in a geographic area. The problem is that is all TDA structure we can't afford. We are inactivating these 10 Regional Readiness Commands so that we can take that structure and reinvest it into the Army Reserve MTOE force. We are not reducing the size of the Army Reserve. What we are doing is restructuring spaces within the Army Reserve to put them into war fighting-type units. We are doing the same thing with the headquarters structures for the training divisions.

ARM: How long will this transformation process take?

Stultz: The timeline we are working on is looking out through 2010 for a lot of this transformation to occur. It will be a phased process.

ARM: What is your view of the transformation?

Stultz: At no time in my 31 years of service have I seen so much turmoil in the force. If you take transformation, Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC), the Global War on Terrorism and the other things that are happening, our organization — the Army — is in a huge state of flux. The thing we have most at risk at this time is our Soldiers. We have got to get the message out to our Soldiers that the Army and the Army Reserve are transforming to do two things: One, provide a force to fight this Global War On Terrorism. First and foremost that is our mission. We must fight this global war on terrorism on an enduring basis and defend this nation's liberties and freedoms. No question about it. But, number two, we're transforming to provide a better career for our Soldiers.

"At the same time, we want to be able to communicate down to the individual Soldier so that they know where they fit into the process."
—LTG Jack C. Stultz

One of the steps we are taking is to institute the Army Reserve Expeditionary Force (AREF) model in conjunction with the Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) model. ARFORGEN is a process that moves units through defined phases in order to reset, train, achieve mission readiness and be available for deployment. The Army Reserve model, AREF, applies this process over a five-year cycle. Under the AREF model, a Soldier would expect to mobilize and deploy every five years if needed. We are trying to put some predictability and stability into the lives of our Soldiers. We can never guarantee our Soldiers five years between call ups because an enemy can attack us anywhere in the world tomorrow and we will be expected to respond. However, we owe it to our Soldiers, our families, and our employers to create a model for predictability and stability based on what we do know and predict as future needs to defend our nation.

There are many positive takeaways from deployments. In talking with our Soldiers serving in Iraq and Afghanistan they often say, "For the first time I am getting to utilize the skills that I have trained on. I feel like I am doing something. I feel like I am making a difference." Also, as we move to a rotational based Army with most of our forces based in the U.S., deployments in the future may include support of military exercises and training in Europe, Korea, Africa or other areas and not be primarily Iraq and Afghanistan. I believe our ability to offer Army Reserve Soldiers the opportunity to travel and participate in operations around the world not only enhances the concept of One Army but also will prove to be a good recruiting and retention tool.

ARM: How visible will the transformation be to the average Army Reserve Soldier attending battle assemblies?

Stultz: Some of it will be transparent and some of it will not. Some of it we want to be transparent to the Soldier because it involves things taking place at the strategic level. They are operating at the tactical level and don't need to be engrossed with issues happening at the strategic level. At the same time, we want to be able to communicate down to the individual Soldier so that they know where they fit into the process. The last thing I want is for a Soldier down at the platoon or squad level to say, "I am not sure I understand why I am here." That Soldier needs to understand exactly what his job is and where he fits into this whole process.

Each Soldier needs to understand where they fit into the whole plan. Then they need to understand where they fit into the AREF timeline. So you can sit down with a Soldier and say, "You are a member of a Heavy Equipment Transporting Truck (HETT) company. You understand what your job and your mission is — to transport equipment in theatre. Your unit deployed in 2004. They came back in 2005. So in our (AREF) process you are in year one, of what we call "reset." Your unit is sending people to school

CHIEF, ARMY RESERVE VISION STATEMENT

"A community-based federal operational force of skill-rich Warrior-Citizens providing complementary capabilities for joint expeditionary and domestic operations."

—LTG JACK C. STULTZ

"The Soldier decides to join the Army Reserve. His family decides if he's going to stay."
—LTG Jack C. Stultz

to get qualified or requalified. You don't have a lot of equipment on hand because your equipment is out getting refurbished. You will be concentrating on individual-level training. You'll be at the weapons range or maybe we'll send out for some adventure training, confidence courses or rappelling. But you are not going to be doing a lot of truck convoys. When you move into year two, you are going to be getting more training. We are probably going to give you a platoon's worth of trucks and you are going to start doing squad-level training. In year three the training will get more intense. Now we are going to bring in a full set of equipment and you are going to be training to conduct truck convoys at the company level. In year four you are getting ready to deploy. You are into some really intense training, probably in conjunction with the headquarters that you will be working for in theatre. In year five you are deploying."

So when the individual Soldier understands his job, his unit's mission and where he is in the AREF process, it will start to come together for him and he will know what he needs to focus on.

ARM: What will the transformation do for the average Army Reserve Soldier?

Stultz: When these initiatives are in place and functioning, the Soldier will be part of a better organization. This will be an organization that provides him better facilities, better training and a clear path of career progression that will allow him to grow and develop to his maximum potential.

As part of the BRAC actions, we are closing 176 Army Reserve centers. But we are building 125 brand new joint reserve facilities. These will be facilities we will share with some of the other reserve components, depending on what kind of other forces are located in the area. By making them joint facilities, it allows us to put in more collective resources that will serve a greater number of people. As a result, these will be first-class facilities. Some will have fitness centers. Some may have billeting available for battle assembly weekends. Some will have distance learning centers where we can allow a Soldier to go to a military school without having to leave his home.

ARM: How will this transformation affect family members?

Stultz: The Soldier decides to join the Army Reserve. His family decides if he's going to stay. This whole thing about predictability and stability is as much about the family as it is about the Soldier. He owes it to his family — and we owe it to him — to be able to say, "We are all part of the Army family. We support and defend our nation. We support each other. We take care of our own." The Warrior Ethos expands beyond our Soldiers to our families as well. ARM

381st Military Brigade Liaison Detachment Sets "Firsts" During Deployment

By Kathryn Roe Coker, Ph.D
Office of Army Reserve History

PHOTO: CPT KURT BRADER

The 381st Military Brigade Liaison Detachment's logistic support area is cleared by the 46th Engineer Battalion.

The 381st Military Brigade Liaison Detachment, San Jose, Calif., a subordinate unit of the 63rd Regional Readiness Command (RRC), was activated in February 1999.

Comprised of 12 Soldiers with five subject-matter experts in the areas of engineer, transportation, quartermaster, judge advocate general and medical service, the detachment was a liaison task force. It was commanded by LTC David Allard.

The brigade mobilized on Feb. 10, 2003 for Operation Enduring Freedom. On Feb. 14, 2003, the unit's advance party arrived at the mobilization station at Fort Lewis, Wash., where they spent seven weeks. There they added Soldiers to the brigade while maintaining 100 percent qualified in their military occupational specialties by conducting training validation and taking skill level courses.

After receiving assistance from the 2122nd Support Group, and acquiring the necessary supplies through the 63rd RRC, the 381st Brigade was validated on March 27, 2003.

By April 3, 2003, the advance party, consisting of the executive officer (X0) and the operations NCO, arrived at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait to reconnoiter field sites in Iraq at the established Enemy Prisoner of War (EPW) site, Camp Bucca, in southern Iraq near the port city of Umm Qasr. The main body arrived in Kuwait on April 11, 2003. After reforming the brigade, the 381st arrived at Camp Bucca on April, 18, 2003. The 381st was reportedly the first military brigade liaison detachment in Iraq and the first of its kind deployed into a combat zone.

By June 2003 approximately 7,000 EPWs were processed through the camp.

Once in theater, the 381st brigade conducted a rear area mission of coordinating the security of EPWs and civilian internees between all military police units. Its main mission, however, was providing staff augmentation for the 800th Military Police Brigade, which had assumed control of Camp Bucca from the British on April 8, 2003. Camp Bucca is the largest EPW camp in Iraq.

From April to June 2003, the 381st Brigade commander served as the deputy commandant of the Camp Bucca theater internment facility. The unit as a whole provided considerable staff assistance to the 800th during EPW criminal investigation operations at the facility and the support base.

After establishing its logistical support area, the 381st began its assistance missions in logistical, engineer, legal, medical and transportation operations. The brigade's logistics officer (S-4) compiled and managed camp logistics statistics. The brigade also provided assistance to Camp Bucca's tactical operations center. To avoid unstructured and hurried demands on military police assets, the XO instituted designated mission times for units. The unit's engineer headed a program to close Camp Bucca, which never materialized. By June 2003 approximately 7,000 EPWs were processed through the camp.

The ultimate goal was to create a prison system under the new Iraqi government for Iraqis to operate on their own.

On June 27, 2003, the unit received a request from the 101st Airborne Division to deploy five Soldiers to support EPW and military police operations for Mosul in northern Iraq. Once there the Soldiers made engineer assessments at four prison sites: the Mosul Regional Confinement Facility, the New Mosul Transportation Jail, Eril Prison and Dahook Prison. The brigade's engineer was the rebuilding project manager. He handled more than three million dollars in civilian contracts. Another duty was training the local Iraqi police force for military police and detainee missions.

The 381st was responsible for coordinating, directing and providing technical oversight for all correctional facilities and correctional training academies in northern Iraq. The ultimate goal was to create a prison system under the new Iraqi provisional government for Iraqis to operate on their own. The 381st received assistance from the 431st Civil Affairs Public Safety Team and the 926th Engineer Group.

Meanwhile, the mission at Camp Bucca continued with the remaining Soldiers until Nov. 20, 2003. During this period, Soldiers from the unit conducted other missions traveling from Doha, Iraq to Baghdad. Those missions included providing legal assistance in addition to supply and transportation missions. Afterward, Soldiers at Camp Bucca relocated to Camp Victory, Baghdad and Camp Ashraf. At Camp Ashraf the 381st coordinated supply and transportation missions.

In February 2004 all the 381st Brigade Soldiers re-grouped at Camp Victory where they assisted the 16th Military Brigade adjust to its location. Meanwhile, the 381st coordinated the military police mission in the area until beginning theater redeployment.

The 381st began on-site out processing on March 14, 2004. Six days later the unit convoyed to Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. On April 2, 2004, the 381st Military Police Liaison Detachment arrived back at San Jose, Calif. Their demobilization was effective June 6, 2004.

Three Soldiers earned bronze stars. Although the unit on occasions had to draw weapons, there fortunately were no causalities for the 381st. ARM

ARMY RESERVE FAMILY

ARMY RESERVE FAMILY PROGRAMS SUPPORT THE HOME FRONT

BY Army Reserve Family Programs Office
U.S. Army Reserve

For every Army Reserve Soldier, there is likely to be a spouse, children, parents, friends and employers who are affected by that Soldier's call to service. More than 140,000 Army Reserve Soldiers have been mobilized in support of the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). Tens of thousands are deployed, preparing for deployment or just returning. The ripple affect of mobilization and deployment touches hundreds of thousands of Americans who love and support our Soldiers.

Meeting the needs of those families on the home front is the mission of the Army Reserve Family Programs (ARFP) office. Soldiers of the Army Reserve are often called to active duty and deploy to support our nation's missions. Separation is never easy. The ARFP office recognizes this and offers innovative programs and systems for families to receive information and assistance.

Army Reserve Family Programs provide coordinated and responsive services to commanders in support of Soldiers, civilian employees, and their families. The vision of family programs is to create an Army Reserve community empowered, sustained, and unified by informed and resilient families in support of the Expeditionary Force.

"Given the sheer number of Soldiers and community members affected by mobilization, and the understanding that taking care of families remains a vital and integral part of mission readiness, our family programs team is working hard to introduce and refine a number of initiatives to address the needs of families," said Lee Ratliff, director of family programs.

Some of these initiatives include:

Army Reserve Family Programs Web Portal www.arfp.org. The Army Reserve Family Programs Portal has been designed to give Soldiers, family, friends and employers of Army Reserve Soldiers an easy to use and easy to remember Web site that serves as the information gateway. Find news of interest to the Army Reserve community, download forms and documents, link to related Web sites and connect with others through the Insite Messenger. Information on the Web portal is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week and the family programs staff is constantly adding new material to the Web portal to insure family members can get answers to questions.

According to Michael Evans, Family Programs Region Manager and project manager for the web Portal, "Our staff is reaching out to families of mobilized and deployed Army Reserve Soldiers every day; addressing concerns, providing support and connecting customers to resources so that issues raised can be remedied."

Mobilization and Deployment. Receiving orders for mobilization and deployment is often the cause of many questions that Soldiers and families have. Family programs staff organized briefings are conducted by subject matter experts to prepare both the Soldier and the family. Health and dental care are

PHOTO: U.S. ARMY

Graduates and trainers in the first ever Army Family Team Building Instructor Training Course gather for a group photo in November 2005. Ten spouses of deployed Soldiers from the 9th Regional Readiness Command attended the course and graduated, becoming new AFTB Instructors. The new AFTB Instructors will now begin offering AFTB courses to the Family Readiness Group's and Soldiers in American Samoa. From left to right: Back row: Maggie Aikala, Taalolo Mann, Margaret Toilolo, Vivian Tauai, Heavenly Letuli, Adrian Moana, Peka Letuligasenoa, Fuata'i Tuliloa, Delaney Tilo, Jenny Logologo, Stacie Pung, AFTB Program Manager. Front row: Selemena Faumeina, Patricia Chong, Rosita Esene, Lesilika Lulio.

covered with TRICARE and United Concordia briefings. Soldiers and families are offered instruction on how to read the Leave and Earnings Statement (LES) and information regarding benefits and entitlements such as Servicemembers Group Life Insurance (SGLI) and Family Group Life Insurance (FGLI). Military resources available to family members are introduced.

Family Programs has also posted a Virtual Mobilization and Deployment Briefing for families on the Web portal, which provides information on ID cards, medical and dental, American Red Cross, benefits and entitlements and many more topics.

Operation Military Child Care (OMCC). Through OMCC any Army Reserve Soldier who is mobilized or deployed in support of the GWOT may be eligible for reduced childcare rates at licensed and legally operating centers during deployment and for up to 60 days after the Soldier returns. In addition, a Soldier can plan ahead to have a special date with their spouse, to conduct personal business, or to enjoy other activities, without the worry of who is watching the kids when the Soldier returns for rest and relaxation. During the two-week leave from Operation Enduring Freedom or Operation Iraqi Freedom Soldiers are eligible to receive a minimum of four hours of free child care from dedicated child care providers across the country who have pledged their support by donating their time and services. Since its launch in May 2004, more than 6,000 child care providers and 200 child care resource and referrals in 37 states have joined the Operation Child Care effort. For more information visit **www.naccrra.org**.

Deployment Cycle Support (DCS). DCS provides valuable instruction for personnel at the unit level, as a first-line information intervention when a family member calls with a question during the mobilization, deployment, sustainment, and reunion phases of the deployment cycle.

Operation READY (Resources for Educating About Deployment and You). Operation READY is a series of training modules, videotapes, CDs, and resource books published for the Army as a resource for staff to train Army families who are affected by deployments. Operation READY materials include: Pre-deployment and Ongoing Readiness, Family Assistance Centers, Homecoming and Reunion, the Army Family Readiness Group (FRG) Leader's Handbook, and the Army Leader's Desk Reference for Soldier/Family Readiness. Activity books for children of deployed Soldiers can be downloaded for free from **www.arfp.org**.

Army Family Team Building (AFTB). AFTB includes 43 different classes which cover a broad range of team and individual skill building. Course topics include Basic Military Benefits and Entitlements, Military Acronyms, and Terms, Family Readiness Groups, Supporting Your Child's Education, Introduction to Financial Readiness, Volunteer Management, Communication Skills, Stress Management, Problem Solving, Time Management, Building Self-Esteem, Conflict Management, Coaching, Mentoring and Advising, Leadership Skills and many others. After AFTB training, family members are more knowledgeable about the military and develop realistic expectations resulting in less frustration and confusion. If informed families can do more to help themselves, the command can focus on its mission while assuring family members that the military support will be there.

Family Programs Academy (FPA). FPA training is divided into three parts: fundamental, developmental and resource. Fundamental FPA training includes the basics to help establish and maintain a viable, functioning FRG at the unit level. Developmental FPA training builds on those basics and enhances the participant's capability to sustain and enhance unit family programs.

Army Reserve Child and Youth Services (ARCYS) Program. The Army CYS Directorate, US Army Community and Family Support Center has extended its mission of providing services that support the readiness and well-being of families to include those families that are geographically dispersed. The Army Reserve now has a CYS staff to assist with the implementation of CYS programs and initiatives, which are designed to reduce the conflict between parental responsibilities and Soldier mission requirements.

The three areas of focus are child care, youth development and student support. These additional assets provide assistance to families in locating quality child care at reduced rates in their own communities; foster relationships between military connected youth; connect families with positive youth development activities for their school age youth; create teen leadership opportunities at local and national levels; educate community members and educators about the unique characteristics of Army Reserve families; and provide student support to Army Reserve children. The ARCYS homepage is at **www.arfp.org/cys**

This program is a force multiplier and retention tool through developing services and activities that are relevant to today's Army Reserve children and youth.

Well Being Advisory Council. This new, dynamic structure is designed to support all five Army Reserve constituent groups: Soldiers, families, civilians, retirees and veterans. The members of the council will include a variety of members from the commands and organizations throughout the Army Reserve, to include family member volunteers. This group will meet twice per year to consider and recommend disposition of issues to the Chief, Army Reserve.

LTG James R. Helmly, former Chief, Army Reserve, recently stated, "The Army Reserve commitment to family programs revolves around supporting Soldiers and their families at all stages of the readiness cycle — premobilization, deployment and post deployment — with the intent of minimizing disruption and anxiety. Our Soldiers and their families deserve no less."

The nearest ARFP staff member can be located by visiting **www.arfp.org** and select Contact Us from the navigation bar. A geographic listing of family programs staff offices will be provided.

FAMILY READINESS PROGRAM FOCUSES ON NEEDS OF MILITARY FAMILIES

By David L. Watson
Public Affairs Office
94th Regional Readiness Command

DEVENS, Mass. — "If the Army wanted you to have a family, they would have issued you one." This was once a long-standing attitude of some first-line commanders in the days prior to Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

It was a rather dismal attitude and one that fortunately has died an unheralded death.

Today, the family goes to war just as it always has, the difference being that now Soldiers go into harm's way with the knowledge that their loved ones are being looked after by a vast network of support services and personnel.

The Army Reserve's cornerstone for family support is the Family Readiness Program (FRP). At the 94th Regional Readiness Command (RRC) a dedicated mix of military, Department of Army (DA) civilians and DA contractors operate the FRP.

Laura Casey, a DA civilian employee with 24 years of federal service, has witnessed the changes the Army made as it has transitioned from very little family support during the Vietnam War to today, where the needs of the military family is of major concern.

"The difference between Vietnam and now is incredible," said Casey. "We did not have all of this [support] then."

Working with families and helping them get needed assistance is what is important, according to Casey. She should know, she's seen a lot in her career.

Starting as a clerk in a maintenance shop at the former Fort Devens, Mass., and then working as secretary in the Chaplain's Office, Casey saw her share of Army life. Taking time off to have a family of her own, Casey returned to federal service, working for several agencies before being hired as secretary to MG William N. Kiefer, commander, 94th Regional Support Command (RSC).

Since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, Casey has been involved with the 94th RRC G-1 personnel staff. She has worked in direct support of Soldiers and their families for the last three years as the assistant to Richard Croucher, program coordinator for the 94th RRC FRP. As Croucher's assistant, Casey is responsible for answering calls from family members, issuing identification cards, briefing Soldiers and their families about benefits and resources and training FRP volunteers.

PHOTO: DAVID L. WATSON

Laura Casey of the 94th Regional Readiness Command Family Readiness Program is a Department of Army Civilian dedicated to helping Army Reserve families.

"Reserve families are so different from families of active duty Soldiers," said Casey. "The benefits are different — resources are fewer and harder to access; [families] are less aware — it's my job to help them get the help they need," said Casey.

"There are so many ways to get help today... so many different programs. The internet alone is incredible in the amount of information that is available to family members," said Casey.

"Without any active duty Army installations in New England, we have become creative in getting help for our families," said Casey. "We connect them online with the Military One Source and Army Community Services. The American Legion, Employer Support of Guard and Reserve and Veterans Affairs, are other resources that give our Soldiers a level of support unheard of in past conflicts."

One resource available in the New England area is the Strategic Outreach to Families of All Reservists (SOFAR) Program.

The SOFAR program members, who were initially contacted by the 883rd Medical Company (Combat Stress Control), Boston, provide free mental health services for military families that have been alerted, deployed, or demobilized in support of military operations. Consisting of a network of volunteer mental health professionals, patients are treated anonymously.

"The FRP supports and holds conferences to train family members wanting to be involved in their Soldier's unit," said Casey. "The Department of Army hosts Army family team building events designed to improve the quality of life for our families."

"The Department of Army hosts Army family team building events designed to improve the quality of life for our families."

—Laura Casey

"The Family Readiness Group leaders are incredible — they are all volunteers who have families of their own — kids, pets and households to take care of, and yet they volunteer to take care of the needs of others," said Casey. "My job is to make sure that the right information is available to the leaders when they need it."

Other changes include an increase in the levels of involvement by non-spouse family members who volunteer their time to support their Soldiers. "Lately I have noticed many parents stepping forward to help with newsletters, phone trees and such — they want to be involved and serve their country on another level," said Casey.

"We deal with all kinds of issues — everything from what to do when the cat that is being looked after by a friend drinks antifreeze, to what to do when a Soldier returns only to find out that their spouse has run off with the kids and wants a divorce," said Casey. "This is serious stuff and I am so glad that our families have the kind of resources available to them that they do."

"Looking back, the Army has come a long way in dealing with Soldiers and their families. Soldiers at one time were trained to believe 'Army first, then family.' What I am seeing now, especially in the Army Reserve is 'Family first,'" said Casey.

"Family Readiness is by far the most rewarding position I have experienced throughout my career — it is all about the families," said Casey. "It has been both an honor and a privilege to support the Army Reserve and its Soldiers and families."

YOUTH PROGRAMS IMPLEMENTED FOR CHILDREN OF ARMY RESERVE SOLDIERS

By Chad Sheldon and Sarah Jones
Regional Coordinators
Army Reserve Child and Youth Services

For just more than one year, the Army Reserve Child and Youth Services (ARCYS) staff has been on the ground making things happen for Army Reserve families.

The mission of ARCYS was spawned from this well known fact: Soldiers, who are also parents, perform their duties more successfully when they are confident their family is doing well at home. Thus, ARCYS' mission is to support the readiness and well-being of geographically dispersed Soldiers, by reducing the conflict between parental responsibilities and mission requirements.

As the Army Reserve has mobilized record numbers of troops to support the missions of the Global War on Terrorism, the Soldiers' children have also been called to serve. The impact on children of lengthy, repeated deployments can be challenging. "It was hard when my dad was gone. I didn't have anyone to

play video games with," were the comments expressed by one seven-year old whose father had commanded a unit in Iraq for more than 15 months.

"The Child and Youth Services team members are youth development professionals that recognize the hardships, which often accompany times of deployment, go beyond the longing for companionship," said Lee Ratliff, director, Army Reserve Family Programs Office. Due to a thorough understanding of what helps children and youth manage times of stress, numerous programs have been implemented throughout the country.

ARMY RESERVE TEEN PANEL

In 2006, the first-ever Army Reserve Teen Panel candidates were selected to represent all Army Reserve youth. Youth contenders from across the nation were chosen to guarantee a diverse, national perspective.

"Each successful applicant had to meet specified requirements in order to participate. The teen panel consists of 18 teens who were enrolled in grades 9-12 for the 2005-06 school year, were in good standing in his/her community, maintained high marks in school and had a desire to make a difference in the lives of others," said Jennifer Benjamin, teen panel project leader and CYS regional coordinator.

The Army Reserve Teen Panel allows youth the opportunity to communicate directly with Army Reserve leadership. These participants, along with three junior advisors, explore issues that are important to the youth living in today's unique world. Then, as a team, they work to create solutions. Teens are encouraged to brief their respective commands and actively educate their communities about the realities of military life. The teens' service and contribution to the panel will be documented evidence of their volunteer efforts, a characteristic which colleges and universities throughout the country are very interested in.

ARMY RESERVE ARMY FAMILY ACTION PLAN

The Army Family Action Plan (AFAP) is a program to improve the quality of life across all components of the Army. Through this strategic process, all members of the Army have an opportunity to voice their concerns to Army leadership and suggest recommendations to impact change. The delegates for the Army Reserve AFAP have traditionally included Soldiers, family members, surviving spouses, Department of the Army civilians, retirees, military technicians, and now, teens who are connected to the Army Reserve.

According to Pamela McBride, Army Reserve Child and Youth Services Program manager, 20 teenagers from across the country participated in the first-ever Army Reserve AFAP teen workgroup in June 2005. In the summer of 2006, teens will again participate in AFAP to enhance the military way of life.

OPERATION PURPLE

For the third year the National Military Family Association has conducted free summer camps across the country for military children who are experiencing the deployment of a parent. One objective of this initiative is to provide an opportunity for children from all branches of the military to come together and create relationships with other youth who are sharing similar experiences.

"In 2006 there will be more than 24 weeks of camp in 22 different states. The camp counselors teach coping skills to help the children better manage the stress of deployment, while allowing the campers to have a great time too," said McBride.

Through youth-centered activities such as horseback riding, canoeing, hiking and crafts, the campers also develop important life skills. Team building activities such as these teach the campers that they can rely on others and help to build self confidence. Enhancing the quality of life for military children enhances the quality of life for their parents as well. In 2005, more than 196 Army Reserve youth attended these camps.

"In 2006, with the acceptance of four Army Reserve proposals to host camps, and strong collaboration with other organizations, the ARCYS staff is aiming to make that number even higher," said McBride.

OPERATION: MILITARY KIDS

The U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Army Youth Development Project have provided the funding to develop a nationwide initiative that provides special emphasis on the children of the Army Reserve. The purpose of this initiative, Operation: Military Kids (OMK), is to establish community support for the youth and families affected by the Global War on Terrorism.

All 50 states in the nation have designated someone to serve as their state's military liaison. Thirty-four states have been awarded grants to fully implement the objectives of OMK. Each OMK state has established teams comprised of community partners, representatives from the National Guard and Army Reserve, and most importantly, youth.

"The core team members have all participated in exclusive training to better equip them in meeting the needs of our "suddenly military" youth and families," said Benjamin.

"I want my friends to understand what it is like to have a parent deployed. I wish my teachers understood." These were the well spoken words of one teen whose parent was serving in Iraq in 2005, according to a CYS regional coordinator. Similar statements have been echoed throughout the country as "suddenly military" youth adapt to their new way of life.

Speak Out for Military Kids is a component of OMK, and ensures the voices of our nation's youth are heard. Youth age 13-17, both military and civilian, are encouraged to join this unique speaker's bureau, which was designed to increase awareness of military family life. The youth conduct research, interview others and investigate specific issues military families confront.

"Using this knowledge, a presentation is developed and then shared within their community and across their state. The youth like it because they enjoy the opportunity to connect with other kids who have had similar experiences," said Ratliff. "Parents like it because they know Speak Out for Military Kids teaches participants critical thinking, leadership and public speaking. These are skills that will serve as a life long benefit to Army Reserve youth." he said.

Army Reserve Child and Youth Services continually seek more children, youth and families who would benefit from the programming. As ARCYS continues to grow, families can expect more exciting opportunities for involvement.

Each Regional Readiness Command has been assigned a regional coordinator who can facilitate access to these programs and provide more information. The Web site, www.arfp.org/cys, has the contact information for the regional coordinators. For more information on Army Reserve Child and Youth Services contact: **arcys@usar.army.mil**.

Other relevant Web sites include: **www.operationmilitarykids.org**, **www.nmfa.org** and **www.arfp.org**.

Youth at a leadership forum engage in a teambuilding activity to establish trust among their peers.

PHOTO COURTESY PAMELA MCBRIDE

TAPED MESSAGES SENT TO CHILDREN OF DEPLOYED SOLDIERS

By Pam Garrison
Public Affairs Office
70th Regional Readiness Command

POCATELLO, Idaho — Army Reserve Soldiers from the 1016th Quartermaster Company had the opportunity to tape personal messages or to read a storybook on tape to be sent to their family members after they had recently deployed.

These special family messages were courtesy of the U.S. Army Child and Youth Services program Operation Military Kids. For the 1016th Qm. Co., Pocatello, Idaho, it is administered by the University of Idaho's Operation: Military Kids 4-H program.

The mobile technology labs in which the pieces were filmed allow children and youth to connect to their deployed parents, according to Chad Sheldon, Army Reserve Child and Youth Services regional coordinator.

These labs consist of laptop computers, color printers, scanners, and digital and video cameras.

Civilian kids in 4-H, Boys & Girls Clubs and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies can also make use of the labs.

Both Washington and Idaho have one of the Operation Military Kids mobile technology labs.

Chad and Sue Philley, coordinators of Idaho State 4-H Operation: Military Kids came up with the idea to tape the 1016th Qm. Co. Soldiers' messages for their families. Sue Philley and SSG Ben Giles of the 70th Regional Readiness Command Family Assistance office recently made it happen.

"The initial effort went well," Sue Philley said. "We invited Soldiers to read stories for their children, or to leave a message that we'll mail to their families. The Soldiers were very responsive.

"We were so excited by the response that we hope to do this more often and to find out what 4-H can do for these folks while their Soldiers are gone and learn about the military," Sue Philley said.

The mobile technology labs in which the pieces were filmed allow children and youth to connect to their deployed parents.

--Chad Sheldon

PHOTO: MSG RICHARD LAMBERT

SFC Crystie Somero reads *McElligot's Pool* to first-graders at St. Anthony's school during Catholic Schools Week.

94TH RRC SOLDIER READS TO LITTLE LEARNERS

By MSG Richard Lambert
Public Affairs Office
94th Regional Readiness Command

FITCHBURG, Mass. — Diminutive desks with hand-written names denote the students in the small seats that they claim, as the first-grade class of St. Anthony's School waits for a Soldier to read *McElligot's Pool* by Dr. Seuss.

During Catholic Schools Week, Jan. 31, 2006, when St. Anthony's focuses on community relations, SFC Crystie Somero, G-1, 94th Regional Readiness Command (RRC), reads a Dr. Seuss classic to 27 students.

After reading to the children, who clapped and thundered, Somero answered the children's questions for those that wondered what a Soldier does.

Do you shoot people? Is it hard? Is it scary? Somero was quick to answer their queries.

"We are very careful when we handle our weapons and always think about safety. We fire our weapons on the ranges. The ranges have dirt piles on each side and special targets. It's all about safety and pride," said Somero. "Sometimes it is hard, sometimes it is scary, sometimes I work hard and then I get weary."

The interrogation continued, as the small children explored whether it was ever possible that a Soldier got bored?

"I am usually so busy that I do not have time to be bored," Somero said.

Do you work everyday? Do you work on the weekends? The relentless grilling was sure to last until Somero answered their questions and fast.

"I like my job a lot, helping and working with other Soldiers. I do work on weekends and I work everyday, but I always find time for a little bit of play with my daughter" said Somero.

The praise from Linda Sordoni, their teacher, came as fast and heavy as the questions.

"It was awesome. The other teachers will be asking me, 'When can I get them in my room,'" said Sordoni about having a Soldier in the classroom. "A lot of the students do not have a chance to meet Soldiers. These events personalize the Soldiers, and the children get to see the positive."

"They see that the Soldiers are like their mom and dad. The Soldiers have kids and they go to work," said Sordoni.

"There are a lot of military ties to the school. Everybody is related to someone stationed somewhere," said Sordoni. "We would like to do this every year."

DADDY GOT HIS ORDERS

By Paul Adams
Army Reserve Public Affairs

FRESNO, Calif. — Military children make a lot of sacrifices when one of their parents gets deployed overseas to support the war in Iraq. They miss the daily contact, the special moments at bedtime reading a story if they are young, the parent cheering them on at the athletic event or the parent's admiration and approval at the child bringing home high marks on a well-earned report card from school.

Yet, thousands of children have had to say goodbye to their daddy (or mommy) in the past four and-a-half years due to military service in support of the Global War on Terrorism. Now, thanks to a new book, perhaps the only one of its kind entitled

In Kathy Mitchell's book, Daddy Got His Orders, she addresses the fears, concerns and questions of deployed service members' children.

ILLUSTRATION: ERNIE (HERGIE) HERGENROEDER

"*Daddy Got His Orders*" by Kathy Mitchell, the fears, concerns and the many questions of deployed service members' children are specifically addressed.

"The book chronicles our five year-old son's (T.J.) experience as he says goodbye to his daddy, SFC James Mitchell, an Active-Guard-Reserve (AGR) Soldier with the Army Reserve's 729th Transportation Company, Fresno, Calif.," Kathy said. "T.J. learns why his daddy must leave him for such a long period of time, but more important that his daddy will be protected while he serves. The book is realistic as it is based on my son's true reactions to his daddy receiving his orders."

Kathy, a full-time high school teacher in Fresno, has been actively been involved in supporting the troops for more than three years, to include leading pro troop rallies, speaking at elementary schools and appearing on local media shows. As an advocate for kids, Kathy sees her mission to heighten public awareness of what military children experience and help them through the difficult time of a parent's deployment.
"When James got put on alert in June 2004, I told him, "I have done things for the Soldiers, now I must help them by helping their kids." She went to the library to get a book to read to T.J. and his seven year-old sister, Kamila about why their daddy had to leave, but found nothing. "I told James I was going to write a book for the kids. I started it in July 2004 and wanted to get done when he got his orders (September 2004). It was close but a little late," Kathy said.

Determined to get the book completed, Kathy had to publish it herself to expedite things. She researched the book industry and networked and received help from MG Ronald Markerian, ret., president, Central California Chapter of the Association of the United States Army (AUSA). Kathy was vice president for family support for the Chapter.

"They awarded me a Certificate of Outstanding Achievement and Public Service in September 2004 for the book. We had a manuscript at that time. I had a donator purchase a book for each Soldier from the 729th. There were 160 Soldiers deployed," Kathy said.

Becoming vice president of family support, Kathy started doing media shows and received many speaking engagements and as a result often raised funds to cover her expenses to then give books to deploying units.

"One of my objectives was to educate non-military families about what military kids go through. So I spoke in elementary classrooms and donated them more books. I have literally hundreds of e-mails about how this book touched the lives of kids, Kathy said.

One moving story was about a Michigan woman who saw a Soldier saying goodbye at the airport and it touched her so much that she searched for a book like Kathy's on the Web and purchased 25 copies of "Daddy Got His Orders" and associated herself with a military support group. Kathy donated an additional 30 more books. "She wrote down every child's name in the support group and where his or her parent was based and I autographed each book," Kathy said. "We became friends as that group adopted my kids and husband to support during the year."

PHOTO: VENESSA MARKERIAN

Kathy, T.J. and Kamila Mitchell are glad to have SFC James Mitchell home from Iraq.

The main comment that Kathy gets about her book is that kids read the book over and over. "It gives them security and a friend in T.J. Parents are so happy to finally find a book to read to their kids," Kathy said.

Kathy mentioned one Marine who was leaving for Iraq and he just found out about the book. He asked her to please rush the order for him to have before he left. His e-mail was so desperate for something to help his child that it broke her heart. "Every e-mail I get, I become friends with the family. I feel their pain, their emotions and we are connected like a family," she said.

She says that she gets updates and hears about their homecomings. "Their stories are like mine and their kids are just like TJ. They all state that their kids asked exactly the same questions as T.J. did. The kids do not feel alone anymore. I have orders from all military branches, but the Army Reserve Soldiers are closest to my heart," Kathy said.

THE SEVEN RULES OF DEPLOYMENT

By Kathryn M. Mitchell
Family Readiness Coordinator
63rd Regional Readiness Command

As a teacher, I like to find a lesson to every life event. When my husband, SFC James R. Mitchell, was deployed to Iraq in October 2004 with the 729th Transportation Company, I quickly learned the lessons of an activated family member.

Perhaps, the first lesson to be learned was that when my husband was activated, we were all activated — my two children, T.J. 6, Kamila 8, and myself. Although James volunteered to enter the Army Reserve, we were essentially drafted into the program. We each had different ways of coping with the deployment including my husband.

His method was denial. He insisted that he was not going anywhere and never would go anywhere because he was "AGR!" He assured me that for him to go anywhere the unit would have to be activated and that would not happen because most of their Soldiers were already attached to other units. Then I remembered, it seemed that everyday new Soldiers and trucks were arriving. He still denied he was going saying "I will only believe it when I am on that plane heading to Iraq." Now that he just came home we cannot believe that he ever went. But he was gone for 15 months. During that time, I consulted many of the spouses and have come up with what I call the seven rules of deployment.

RULE #1: The first time you go to a park with your kids, it will seem like dads' day at the park. Every child will be playing with his father but yours. During these times you may have to borrow someone's dad to play with your child. If you are T.J., you go up to a dad and announce "My daddy is in Iraq and I need you to play with me." That strategy does seem to work.

RULE #2: While your spouse is adjusting to the demanding training schedule, in our case at Fort Lewis, Wash., you will find out that not every night was as terrible as he portrayed. Universally, every wife will find that mystery charge to Hooters once she receives the monthly credit card statement. We just wonder which night they went out since the nightly phone calls never seem to reflect an evening of fun.

RULE #3: When your spouse is gone everything will break down. The roof will leak — ours was even new. The hot water heater will stop working. The washing machine will leak. The cable company will become your best friend. Your car will break down at least twice — even if your husband is a mechanic. A corollary to this rule his car battery will die and the car will collect dust even if you continue to drive it.

RULE #4: You may think you can save a lot of money due to the extra pay. No matter how much extra pay he gets, it will not be enough. You have phone calls to pay for. Yes, we get phone cards, but do they work on that phone system? We send packages. Flat rate boxes came into effect shortly after the deployment, thank goodness. You have childcare expenses that you never had before. Then, when you think it is all over and they are coming home, you have to spend money to send home his personal belongings. That trunk is pretty heavy.

RULE #5: Do not expect everyone to recognize a military power of attorney. Defense Eligibility Enrollment System (DEERS) may even refuse to talk to you insisting they need to talk to the Soldier. You then have to explain that he is in Iraq on convoy missions and they respond by saying "they do have phones over there." You might also argue with a financial institution that wants a specific power of attorney that a general military power of attorney is more inclusive and should suffice. Eventually, they may get it.

RULE #6: Whatever date they say they are coming home will be changed several times. Do not plan a homecoming party on the first date given for their arrival or you may be partying alone.

I have certainly learned many things while my husband was gone. I am proud of myself for several accomplishments. I never once missed his phone call. I did not want him wasting time walking or taking a bus, standing in line and then calling only to get my recording. I actually learned some practical things — like how to use a screwdriver, set the timers on the sprinklers, put air in my tires and how to navigate through DEERS and TriWest. Most important, I learned how much I missed my husband, a fact that leads to the last rule of deployment.

RULE #7: A deployment can either strengthen or weaken a marriage. For us, we have grown stronger as a couple and a family learning to appreciate what truly matters most in life — each other. My six-year old son said it best at the dentist office. The dentist told us that T.J. was grinding his teeth. I asked him why. He responded, "Dad I'm angry." I then told the dentist that next year we shouldn't have this problem when his dad is back. T.J. then replied "I will still grind my teeth, because I will never get this year out of my head." I, too, will never forget the year but feel stronger because of it and blessed to have him home. I have a greater appreciation for all those who have served their country and am grateful to the Soldiers and their families who I now know sacrifice so much at home.

ARMY WAY OF LIFE KEEPS TALENTED RESERVE FAMILY TOGETHER

By Paul Adams
Army Reserve Public Affairs

DALLAS — For Linda Martin, being an Army spouse for nearly 20 years, military life has been the norm for her and her husband, Craig and their children. But their Army way of life, highlighted with some significant and unusual family accomplishments, has kept this family of four together.

As a published author, ordained minister, and the reigning Mrs. Plus America 2005, Linda is most proud of her family. Her husband Craig is an Active Guard Reserve (AGR) NCO with 94th Combat Support Hospital in Seagoville, Texas, and a professional magician. Their two talented children, Raymond, 18, will soon be a published poet and Robert, 13, an honor student, participates in three sports and excels in music playing seven different instruments.

Linda was crowned Mrs. Plus America in New Orleans, La., on July 30, 2005 and published her first book, Better Than Sacrifice, in December 2005. She is also a motivational speaker, television host and a Christian recording artist and sings in both English and Spanish.

Following in his mother's footsteps, Raymond will release his first book of poetry, My Words in Black and White in 2007. Robert takes after his self-taught magician dad and focuses his efforts playing the cello, bassoon, tuba, trumpet, coronet, baritone, and guitar.

All these accomplishments and activities and Craig's being away on annual training, operations, temporary duty (TDY) and a permanent change of station (PCS), during 12 years of active duty and reserve component assignments suggest a very hectic life style and a challenge when SFC Martin is away.

Coping while SFC Martin is away has been a challenge, particularly when their children were young. "I had to learn how to console them when they went through periods of crying because they missed their daddy," said Linda. "There were moments when the boys and I all cried together."

Eventually Linda learned to help her children talk about the good things; about having their dad home and what they wanted to do when he returned from Korea. "Since the boys are older now and Craig's assignments are shorter, we shift gears and responsibilities accordingly and keep going."

Raymond and Robert like their dad being in the reserve more than active duty because Craig is more visible. "It's as if dad has a regular nine-to-five job," said Raymond.

Brother Robert is in agreement. "Yea, it's really cool that dad can come to my games and concerts too. It's just like he has a regular job like my classmate's dads, except my dad is a Soldier." Robert said.

According to Craig, the AC and the RC share many similarities and all families need support prior to, during and after deployment. He feels that it also becomes the spouse's responsibility to become the mom or father while the Soldier is deployed, which is not an easy task. "I think it's a little harder for the family of the reserve Soldiers since they reside in different towns and cities. We seldom have the opportunity to associate or develop friendships with other families unless it's a family day during battle assembly or Christmas." Craig said.

Linda feels that being a reserve family is quite different from that of an active duty military family. "For example, the reserve military family doesn't live on base, our children attend public schools as opposed to schools located on base," Linda said. "What I miss most is the camaraderie of the neighborhood. When we were active duty and lived on post, we shared the same holidays, concerns and we all spoke the same language, military terminology.

"I'm proud of Craig," Linda said. "He's a model Soldier and a wonderful NCO. Craig enlisted in the Army when we graduated from high school back in 1985 so the Army way of life is "the norm" for our family. It moves me to tears whenever we are in public and complete strangers approach us and thank Craig for what he and the other service men and women are doing for our country." ARM

For SFC Craig Martin, Linda and their two children, Robert, left and Raymond, the Army way of life has been the norm for the Martin family.

PHOTO COURTESY LINDA MARTIN

SFC

Update on OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

USAR SOLDIERS BREATHE LIFE INTO MILITARY VEHICLES

By SPC Debralee P. Crankshaw
11th Public Affairs Detachment,
Coalition Forces Land Component Command-Kuwait

CAMP ARIFJAN, Kuwait — Just like junk yards in the United States, the junk yard in Camp Arifjan, Kuwait is concerned with salvaging parts and using those parts to return vehicles to service.

Fifteen Army Reserve Soldiers from the Onalaska, Wis., 458th Ordnance Company, are deployed to Camp Arifjan in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom where they run the Controlled Parts Reclamation (CPR) point, stripping unserviceable vehicles for essential parts. They also visit other salvage yards to collect parts.

Their work has saved the Army approximately $732,000 in just four months of operation, according to CWO A.R. Ballard, 321st Theater Material Management Center (TMMC), forward fleet maintenance management officer in charge. The 321st is an Army Reserve unit from Baton Rouge, La.

SFC Thomas Blohowiak removes an instrument panel from a Humvee.

PHOTO: SPC DEBRALEE CRANKSHAW

Prior to implementing the program, vehicles went to the Defense Reutilization and Marketing Office, the collection point for excess military property, and turned into scrap metal.

"It's a supplement to the overall logistics system," Ballard said about CPR. "It's been a $700,000 infusion of parts that cost zero dollars. We've saved because we didn't have to purchase the parts. This seemed like the fastest, easiest way to get those parts."

The 458th Ord. Co. team includes mechanics, inspectors, supply clerks, an administrative specialist and a warrant officer in charge. The inspectors identify usable parts, mechanics remove them and a welder removes major fasteners with a torch or impact wrench.

Salvageable parts include variant springs, frame rails, ballistic doors and glass, fuel tanks, gauge panels, hard-to-find bolts and items with long ship dates. The Soldiers then clean and tag the items by condition: A for brand new parts in original packaging. B is like new, but not in the original package; and F is serviceable or repairable, but needs to be tested or inspected. Finally, they transport the parts to a warehouse to be integrated into the system.

"Every part we pull is one less that we have to buy," said CWO Anthony Rombalski, 458th Ord. Co., officer in charge at the site. "An operation like this is important for the Army because if we weren't in the yard pulling off these parts, putting them back into the system, they would go straight to the Defense Reutilization and Marketing Office and nobody would be condition coding anything. Everything would be getting cut up as scrap."

PHOTO: SPC DEBRALEE CRANKSHAW

Vehicles at Controlled Parts Reclamation point are ready to be stripped of useful parts. In the first four months of CPR operations, 458th Ordnance Company Soldiers have collected more than $700,000 worth of parts from vehicles.

In addition to saving money, the program gets vehicles back on the road faster.

"The war fighter will come down from Iraq and various places in Kuwait and we're basically their last avenue before they have to be at the mercy of ordering it through the supply system," Rombalski said.

"We help them get back in the fight quicker, faster," said SFC Thomas Blohowaik, 458th Ord. Co., and NCO in charge.

Ballard said the CPR site in Kuwait is the only place he is aware of that conducts this type of mission, but the 321st TMMC hopes to expand it to other parts in the theater. "It's a crown jewel here in Arifjan; it's a shining example of how the system works well. We're using the system to its maximum," said Ballard.

Approximately 120 Soldiers of the 458th Ord. Co., deployed to Kuwait in September 2005 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. In addition to running the CPR point, the Soldiers assist with the deployment and redeployment of coalition forces, operate warehouses and manage wash rack operations.

"It's a crown jewel here in Arifjan; it's a shining example of how the system works well. We're using the system to its maximum."

—CWO A.R. Ballard

"BULLDOGS" HUNT IEDS IN AFGHANISTAN

CPT Jeffery T. Burroughs
Commander
Company B, 391st Combat Engineer Battalion

KHAYR KOT, Afghanistan — Each day, Soldiers of Company B, 391st Combat Engineer Battalion, York, S.C., the "Bulldogs", rise before the first rays of the sun shine over the mountains. They begin working on their vehicles preparing weapons and ammunition and reviewing enemy intelligence reports and route overlays in preparation for their mission. They know the success of all follow-on forces hinges on the successful execution of their patrols. The Bulldogs are the Army's Improvised Explosive Device (IED) hunters in Afghanistan.

The Bulldogs detect and destroy IEDs, the number one casualty producer in the Global War on Terrorism. Each morning this company of Soldiers departs forward operating bases in the mountains of Afghanistan in search of that which all other units seek to avoid. They conduct one of the most hazardous missions and maintain one of the highest OPTEMPOs of any unit in country, and they do it willingly.

The Bulldogs are the tip of the spear in the fight against insurgency in Afghanistan. In order to successfully provide assured mobility to the maneuver task forces in the area, they must move in advance of the units they are supporting, often by several hours. They clear routes for infantry and Special Forces patrols through areas fraught with enemy activity over some of the most hostile terrain ever negotiated by U.S. forces in combat operations.

"We'll go anywhere, anytime, if it means we can keep someone from getting blown up," said 2LT Joseph J. Foriska, platoon leader for one of the Route Clearance Packages. This willingness to place themselves in harm's way at the forefront of the battle has led to them being described as "alone and unafraid."

Intense study of enemy intelligence reports is necessary to determine the locations of the highest IED threat areas and which coalition patrols are at the highest risk of being targets of the various IED cells. "We have to clear the most dangerous areas," said SSG Louis M. Nelson, 2nd platoon squad leader, "because that's where the IEDs are."

They have excelled at their mission, patrolling more than 30,000 kilometers in support of maneuver elements and detecting and destroying 29 IEDs. The most important statistic, however, is the decrease in coalition forces hit by IEDs. Since Co. B began providing assured mobility, the IED incident rate for coalition patrols has dropped a staggering 87 percent in the "Bulldog" areas of operation.

With the hunt for IEDs comes a significant amount of tactical risk. Their mission requires a heightened sense of situational awareness. "We have to look at everything. Trash, rocks, people, everything. Any change or anything out of the ordinary could tip us off to an IED," said SFC Glen E. Sims, 2nd platoon sergeant and route clearance patrol leader.

Insurgent forces have targeted Co. B patrols on numerous occasions. These direct attacks comprise the bulk of IED attacks against coalition forces in the area. The mine protected vehicles that some Soldiers operate, however, have proven their worth. Most recently, one of the mine protected troop carriers with stood a direct hit from an IED dug into the middle of the road, with all personnel escaping with relatively minor injuries.

The insurgents have rapidly and consistently adapted their tactics to defeat the route clearance package. Through the use of varying firing systems, emplacement of nonstandard munitions and alternate emplacement locations, the enemy has attempted to avoid the route clearance packages' detection of these devices. Flexibility, adaptability and the use of innovative techniques have been the benchmark of Co. operations.

SPC David H. Rhames, the operator of the Husky detection vehicle and the lead vehicle in all patrols, describes route clearance as, "an extremely dangerous chess match. We're just trying to stay one move ahead of the insurgents."

1SG Carl A. Gehring summarizes his company's attitude toward their extremely dangerous mission and what it means to them. "We are proud of what we are doing and the successes we are having, in spite of the danger. We don't want anyone else to do it, and we wouldn't give up this responsibility, because we're making a difference."

They are very protective of those they lead into harm's way. "If we don't find the IED's, then they are going to find someone else, and that means that another Soldier or civilian is going to pay the price," Gehring said.

The "Bulldogs" are taking the fight to the enemy and making a difference with each patrol they conduct.

Company B, 391st Combat Engineer Battalion, embarks on a route clearance patrol over rugged terrain in support of Task Force Fury near Naka, Afghanistan.

PHOTO: CPT JEFFREY BURROUGHS

14TH QUARTERMASTER DETACHMENT HONORED 15 YEARS LATER

By Jack Gordon
Public Affairs Office
99th Regional Readiness Command

GREENSBURG, Pa. — Each person had the opportunity to touch one of the 15 white doves that were symbolically released, each representing a Soldier from the 14th Quartermaster Detachment, an Army Reserve unit located in Greensburg, Pa., that received the call to duty 15 years ago.

The unit's Soldiers answered America's call, and after arriving in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, a Scud missile tore through the thin, sheet metal barracks facility where they were residing while awaiting a mission. The attack killed 28 and wounded 99 Soldiers. The tragedy marked the single most devastating and costly attack from an Iraqi enemy that formally surrendered hours later. The 15 white doves soared into the winter blue skies above the monument that was created to memorialize the Soldiers' selfless duty and sacrifice.

More than 100 members of honor guards from regional VFWs, American Legions, Vietnam and Korean Veterans' organizations, as well as other civic groups surrounded the monument, all bearing the flags of the United States, their representative service branches and the commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The commonwealth lost more armed forces' service members than any other during Operation Desert Storm. Congressman Tim Murphy (18th District), Pa., also attended the ceremony, to recall and honor the fallen.

Now, a generation later, the children of the children of those Soldiers are attending a service they know has something to do with war... and with personal loss. They see it in the quiet tears streaming down the faces of their grandmother or grandfather, or in the hand of one person gently holding that of another. Some probably even feel it in the shivers that stand the hair on the backs of necks on end not from the brisk February air in southwestern Pennsylvania, but more from the notes of "*Amazing Grace*" being piped over the crowd, and the familiar sound of "*Taps*" blown from the end of a bugle by a World War II combat veteran; and from the sharp returns of the three, shot-volleys fired over the monument in a traditional 21-gun-salute. These are reactions of caring, and actions of honoring.

Many of those who gathered know each other well after sharing the anticipation of 15 long years of knowing this day will always arrive; marking another year on their calendar of life without their loved one whose life was lost to war. Those who traveled from far and near to attend this event fully realized that military service in the name of the nation is dangerous and often deadly duty. They know that in a nation's victory, there exist many personal losses. They know the expressions on their faces capturing their losses, the 15 white doves symbolically represent the spirit and souls of those 14th Qm. Det. Soldiers who left the safety and security of their civilian lives to become Soldiers, and died in the service of the U.S. Army.

The monument serves as a bedrock location for all those whose losses are recalled every year on this day — it's a place where the emotional pain of their individual and common loss can be shouldered together, and it is.

The 99th Regional Readiness Command Deputy Commanding General, BG William D.R. Waff, said, "Today America is focused on another war, and even as this new war continues, do not think we have forgotten the sacrifice of these Soldiers."

Also honoring the loss of so many fellow Soldiers 15 years ago were several Soldiers now serving the 14th Qm. Det. The unit, whose ranks are completely filled with new Soldiers, recently returned home from a year-long tour of duty in Iraq. During the 2005 deployment, the unit conducted a memorial service for their fallen Desert Storm 14th Qm. Det. Soldiers in-arms at its duty location in Logistics Support Area Anaconda in Balad, Iraq.

As the white flock of doves circled above the monument area three or four times before disappearing over the horizon, faces were uplifted toward the heavens. As those faces returned to earth — to the monument, the notes of "*Amazing Grace*" began sounding from a bagpiper standing among the horseshoe-shaped honor guards. As the tears began, the healing continued, because standing silently, but very tall beside "loss" in Greensburg, Pa.... is honor.

PHOTO: JACK GORDON

A large vine wreath adorned with a yellow bow and flowers bore a ribbon inscribed with the phrase "We will not forget — 15 years ago — the Soldiers of the 99th RRC, U.S. Army Reserve." The wreath was emplaced at the monument by BG William D.R. Waff, left, 1LT David Rodriquez, Maria Wolverton and Connie Clark (not pictured). Both Clark and Wolverton lost Soldiers in the attack 15 years ago.

PHOTO: U.S. ARMY

SPC Michael Nuzum, left, builds shelves for storage as SPC Duane Moore stabilizes the boards for Nuzum.

ENGINEERS OVERCOME OBSTACLES TO COMPLETE MISSIONS

By SPC Michael Weerts
Public Affairs Office
88th Regional Readiness Command

TIKRIT, Iraq — Company C, 983rd Engineer Battalion is primarily comprised of skilled civilian carpenters, plumbers and electricians who work hard to be successful in their chosen craft. Given extreme heat, powder-like soil, poor working materials and hazardous duty in Iraq, the Soldiers are finding that adapting and overcoming adversity can be a frustrating experience for perfectionists.

The construction gurus from Monclova, Ohio, have had to adjust basic routine tasks and acclimatize to unusual circumstances since their deployment began in December 2005. With heat reaching approximately 120 degrees fahrenheit in the shade during the summer months, a simple task such as pouring cement can become a difficult procedure.

"It is tough to pour cement, especially in the middle of summer," said Company C Commander 1LT Dave Lubke. "We usually pour very early in the morning, but the water and inconsistencies in the concrete mixture from one truck to another, coupled with the fact that it dries incredibly fast, will surface cracks, sometimes causing us to re-pour the cement."

From light switches to plumbing supplies, the materials the Soldiers have to work with are of poor quality and are not made for durability. "The plywood layers peel apart and the lumber is warped and twisted," said Lubke. "The material is usually not of good quality and good enough to last only a few years."

Similar to the United States, permits must be submitted before the crews can start digging. Permits and codes are followed on any new installation the crew constructs, and new electrical work must follow the European Electrical Code. "The electrical cables

that the Iraqi people previously buried aren't very deep, and we will sometimes dig up unexploded ordinance," Lubke explained.

On one occasion, Lubke's Soldiers dug up an old Iraqi ammunition storage facility, uncovering several small rockets and motors. "In one case, a Soldier uncovered an unexploded 500-pound bomb that the U.S. had previously dropped, when he drove over it with a D7 dozer," Lubke said.

Since being in theater, Company C's primary mission has been to either close or turn over military bases to the Iraqi military. They have closed or turned over six bases, with the workload generated by each job ranging from slight to heavy. Closing a base involves leveling beams, tearing out protective barriers (earth filled containers), spreading the fill, picking up and hauling away concrete barriers and burying or hauling away garbage.

"We spent about a week closing one base down just running our dump trucks back and forth to remove garbage and debris," Lubke said. "We used a lot of tires during that mission, and some Soldiers spent a night underneath the stars because it got too late in the evening to go get them."

In April 2005, the 983rd Engr. Bn. companies separated to help support different missions, leaving Company C the lone representative of the 983rd at Forward Operating Base Speicher near Tikrit, Iraq. The other companies moved to Fallujah, Iraq and reported to the Marines.

"The communication was tough," said Lubke. "We have both an unsecured and a secure e-mail system, but at any given time one or both of them can go down for a few days, and the digital non-secure voice terminal phone connection usually has a lot of static and can be tough to get through."

Despite having SGT Gary 'Andy' Eckert, SFC Matthew Kading and SPC Kendall Frederick killed in action (Kading died of wounds received in Iraq), CPT Benjamin Janski who died in a vehicular accident in Iraq, and four other Soldiers wounded in action, the Soldiers' morale remained good for the duration of the deployment. "We try to keep our Soldiers busy, but still give them an adequate amount of down time," said Lubke.

While times have been tough for Company C, being an engineer company does have its perks. "Our carpenters built all of our office furniture, and reconstructed a gazebo in our courtyard to go along with the horseshoe pits and volleyball courts that we built," Lubke said.

Company C met challenges throughout their year-long deployment but adjusted to each situation and worked around each obstacle that was presented to them. "We had a tough deployment, but we made the most out of it and did some solid work considering the conditions and materials we were given," said Lubke. "It went by fast but we are glad to be home."

RESERVE SOLDIERS AID IRAQI ARMY IN CONDUCTING CIVIL OPERATIONS

By SPC Michael Pfaff
133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

KIRKUK, Iraq — As infantrymen train the Iraqi Army for the transfer of security a different group of Soldiers are showing the Iraqi troops another side of being a guardian of the citizens.

Army Reserve Soldiers from Company B, 451st Civil Affairs Battalion, Pasadena, Texas, have been working with the Iraqi Army for the last few months showing them how to perform civil operations with the public.

"Initially, they did not feel comfortable working with the public and leaving a good impression," said MAJ. Harry Kim, the general support team chief and a Los Angeles, Calif., native. "But, after a few joint operations, the Iraqi Army now feels comfortable conducting operations within the public."

"And, now they (children) are beginning to feel friendly toward the Iraqi Army in their neighborhood."

—MAJ Harry Kim

One part of the public that the Iraqi Army had trouble with was the children in the communities, Kim said. But, after spending time working with children the Iraqi troops are becoming better at it.

"A lot of operations are conducted with children," Kim said. "And now they are beginning to feel friendly toward the Iraqi Army in their neighborhood."

Garnering that friendship with the public has been a long road for the Iraqi Army, Kim went on to say. But, they are quickly moving toward a good civil presence within the communities.

On a recent goodwill mission in Kirkuk, Soldiers from Co. B, 451st CA Bn. visited a neighborhood schoolhouse with the Iraqi Army. Stuffed animals and toys were supplied by the Soldiers and given to the children by the Iraqi Army troops.

"We help the Iraqi Army put the pieces back together," said CPT Jamie Ramos, San Diego, Calif.

Ramos explained that his unit helps the new Iraqi government accomplish such tasks as road and building projects, solving plumbing and drainage problems, and facilitating civil engineering projects.

"We want to be out of the picture," said SGT Joseph Perez, a team leader and a Santa Fe, Texas native. "We want to teach these people how to interact with the public, so we let them do the interaction. We're kind of like the guy behind the scenes."

Kim said he stayed behind the scenes and let MAJ Junade Zyad, the Iraqi Army brigade civil military officer, run the operation.

"The Iraqi Army is now improving their public image," Kim said. "Especially, MAJ Zyad, who acts as our counterpart in the Iraqi Army."

At the schoolhouse, Zyad handed out toys to Christian and Muslim children alike. Zyad said he felt that the Iraqi Army made the children happy with the gifts.

"He is very good at dealing with the children and he works well with the media," Kim said. "He's been such a great help in accomplishing our mission, which is to get the Iraqi Army to stand on their own."

"We want to be out of the picture. We want to teach these people how to interact with the public, so we let them do the interaction. We're kind of like the guy behind the scenes."

—SGT Joseph Perez

As the Iraqi Army continues to take over responsibility for the citizens of Iraq, they must also work to establish a relationship with the people they are protecting so that they can stand on their own. ARM

An Iraqi policeman passes out handbills in order to initiate conversation and ask if there are any problems the people are having.

PHOTO U.S. ARMY

FEATURES

VIRTUAL UNIVERSITY GIVES SOLDIERS, OTHERS MORE TRAINING TIME

By CPT Monica Radtke
Public Affairs Office
84th U.S. Army Reserve Readiness Training Command

FORT McCOY, Wis. — A web-based portal containing current and relevant training is only a mouse click away — anytime from anywhere in the world.

The 84th U.S. Army Reserve Readiness Training Command (USARRTC) Virtual University was created to give Army Reserve commanders, Soldiers and civilian employees a cost-effective and user friendly option to completing required, as well as other professional development, training.

The system, launched in June 2003, was designed for convenience as users can logon at any computer that has an Internet connection regardless of geographic location. This resource enables commanders to spend more time with their Soldiers for other mission essential training.

"Troops will no longer have to use valuable time at battle assemblies to complete mandatory training," said Tammy Hillyer, Web administrator for the 84th USARRTC. "The Virtual University gives hours back to the commanders so they can focus on war-time training missions."

LTG James R. Helmly, former chief, Army Reserve, directed attendees at the November 2005 Army Reserve Commander's Conference to use the Virtual University. "Use this, and get out of the classroom for training," said Helmly. "Effective today, do mandatory training virtually."

In addition to 47 other courses, mandatory training such as Prevention of Sexual Harassment, Subversion and Espionage Directed Against the U.S. Army and Operational Security are all available on the Virtual University. Courses ranging from one to 40 hours are also offered in the areas of Government Travel Card, Management Controls, Personal Finance Management, Unit Status Report, European Driver Training and several others.

"Troops will no longer have to use valuable time at battle assemblies to complete mandatory training."
—Tammy Hillyer

A unique feature of the Virtual University is the ability for commanders and supervisors to track their unit's progress. Real-time reports are readily available and are broken down by each Army Reserve Major Support Command (MSC). Commanders can check to see who has enrolled and completed specific courses.

Enrollments in the Virtual University continue to increase. From its inception in 2006 more than 44,000 users had enrolled in at least one course on the Virtual University and the enrollments have been increasing by more than 140 users each day.

"The 81st Regional Readiness Command (RRC) currently leads the Army Reserve with the number of enrollments," said Hillyer. One of the 81st RRC's initiatives was directing its staff to go to the Virtual University and complete Information Assurance Awareness training in conjunction with the recent Army Reserve security stand down.

PHOTO: CPT MONICA RADTKE

SSG Brandon W. Hunsaker, SFC Lonnie R. Jordan, SFC Booker T. Moore and SFC James Davis, left to right, attend mandatory operational security training via Virtual university.

The Virtual University is not just for Soldiers. "Every contractor and civilian employee working for the Department of Defense needs to complete Information Assurance Awareness training if they are using a government issued computer," said Hillyer. "This course is available on the Virtual University."

Once a user logs onto the VU their individual homepage appears. Their homepage lists both the courses they have enrolled in and the courses they have completed. System features allow a student to pick-up an unfinished course right where they had left off. Students also have the ability to go back and conduct refresher training on courses they previously completed.

The Virtual University is continually updated with new courses and information. One of the current projects is personalizing the pages for each of the Army Reserve's MSCs.

"When users logon, they will see a customized portal complete with their own unit patch and a statement that identifies the unit," said Hillyer.

To view a list of available courses, simply go to the 84th USARRTC Web site at **https://arrtc.mccoy.army.mil** and logon to the Virtual University using your AKO username and password.

- ★ select the course catalog tab at the top of the screen
- ★ select "ARRTC Realm" on the left side of the screen
- ★ primary categories of training are listed (click on the individual category folder for specific courses)

Users enrolled in the same course can also arrange for time on the Collaborative Learning Environment (CLE). The CLE provides a workspace that users can chat with one another real-time.

The Learning Management System which supports the system the Virtual University operates on is large enough to support 10 million users at one time, so Soldiers and civilian employees can be assured the Virtual University will not be slow or bogged down while in use.

> "The Virtual University offers something for everyone — students, training developers and training NCOs — all in one very convenient place."
> —Tammy Hillyer

In the event there are questions or concerns, customer support is available to all users 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

"No one should let a local technical glitch stand in the way of training," said Hillyer. "If customer support is unable to solve the problem online, then additional support will be made available."

Upon completion of each course on the Virtual University, users will also graduate virtually by receiving a signed certificate.

"The Virtual University offers something for everyone–students, training developers and training NCOs– all in one very convenient place," Hillyer said.

ARMY RESERVE LINGUISTS IMPROVE THEIR SKILLS THROUGH IMMERSION

By SFC Chad Garza
Military Intelligence Readiness Command

FORT BELVOIR, Va. — SSG Betty Asbury had the privilege of speaking to a Basic Chinese-Mandarin class at Defense Language Institute (DLI) in the fall 2005. Looking at their eager faces, she remembered when she was sitting in their seats, feeling just as eager to learn the language. Asbury's goal was to share with them the vast opportunities available as an Army linguist. When she attended the same 63-week course, she had no idea of such opportunities.

Asbury mentioned the immersion program, which she recently attended in Beijing, China. She explained how her teachers pushed her to use her full potential to learn the language, culture, history and economics. "Having to speak the language the entire day, seven days a week improved my language skills dramatically," Asbury said.

Asbury then described her experience at Camp Zama, Japan, where she supported the Asian Studies Detachment of the 500th Military Intelligence Battalion. She applied her improved language skills to support the mission and master a new skill at the same time.

The Military Intelligence Reserve Command (MIRC) offers immersions for all Army Reserve linguists, not just MI Soldiers, in the following languages: Russian, Chinese, Spanish, French, Serbo-Croatian, Korean, Vietnamese, Japanese, Persian-Farsi and Tagalog. Immersions have proven to be very effective means of enhancing Soldiers' language capabilities.

> "Having to speak the language the entire day, seven days a week improved my language skills dramatically."
> —SSG Betty Asbury

SSG Anne Marie McKinney, 323rd Military Intelligence Battalion, who attended Russian immersion training states, "Over the years, I've taken both refresher courses and immersion programs and nothing improves my abilities like being in-country. Opportunities like this are one of the main reasons I have stayed in the Army. Immersion programs are important for retention, maintenance and improvement of abilities and overall career satisfaction," she said.

Immersions are definitely a high impact training opportunity. However, there are other opportunities available for linguists to improve their skills. In addition to the immersions, language classes are offered at the Language Centers at Fort Meade, Md., Fort Gordon, Ga. and in Hawaii. Soldiers desiring the experience to use their language skills can also take advantage of several tour opportunities. These opportunities are published on the Army Reserve Command Language Program Web site on Army Knowledge Online (AKO). There is also the Rosetta Stone language program available on AKO that offers 29 languages to choose from for self-directed learning. This program is free to all Soldiers. For more information about these programs, contact your unit's Command Language Program Manager. You can also search the USAR Command Language Program Web site in AKO at **https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/168701**.

PHOTO: SSG CHAD GARZA

Army Reserve Soldiers, right, improve their French language skills during a walking tour on the Champs d'Elysees near the Arc de Triumph, Paris, France.

RESERVE SOLDIER FULFILLS FAMILY PROMISE, EARNS JUMP WINGS

By Jason Cardenas
Public Affairs Office
Fort Lee, Va.

FORT BRAGG, N.C. — For SGT Amy Dye, 824th Quartermaster Company, Fort Bragg, N.C., a third generation Soldier, Airborne School was more than just another military school to complete.

For her, it was about keeping a promise to her late Uncle Jim, an Airborne Ranger in the Vietnam War, who passed away in 2001.

Dye first enlisted in the U.S. Army Reserve in 1995, as a counterintelligence agent.

After completing basic and advanced individual training, She went to Fort Benning, Ga., for Airborne School.

By the end of the first week, she injured her leg and returned home. "After returning home, my dad, David Dye, and I went to see my Uncle Jim Dye," she said. "That's when Uncle Jim gave me his black beret and handed me his airborne wings."

"You can have these wings if you earn them, but only if you earn them," Dye recalled her uncle saying.

"You can have these wings if you earn them, but only if you earn them."
—SGT Amy Dye recalling what her uncle told her.

Accepting the beret and wings in hand, Dye promised her uncle she would earn the wings he had passed on to her. Needless to say this task would not be an easy one. The promise she made in April 1996 began a seven-year quest.

"While stationed with Company B, 337th Military Intelligence (MI) Battalion, in East Point, Ga., I begged to go back to Airborne School," said Dye. "The unit told me I couldn't go because there were no slots for me at that time. I then moved to Fort Lewis, Wash., and was stationed with Co. C, 368th MI Bn., in Tumwater, Wash."

PHOTO COURTESY SGT AMY DYE

SGT Amy Dye completes her fifth jump in Airborne School. Dye fulfilled a promise given to her uncle nine years earlier on his deathbed to earn the Airborne wings he gave her.

During the next seven years, Dye was assigned to two different Army Reserve units. While at both units she continued to try to return to Airborne School. She received the same answer of 'we don't have a slot for you or we are not an airborne unit.' It seemed that keeping her promise would never be realized.

"In 2003, I got out of the Army after completing my first enlistment," said Dye. "I received my honorable discharge papers, and it was quite sad that I didn't get it accomplished."

When she left the Army in 2003, the Army was not readily reclassifying counterintelligence agents. The only way she would fulfill her promise was to find an airborne unit.

"While in the midst of moving to Richmond, Va., I thought, 'What am I going to do with these wings?'" said Dye. "I told my Uncle Jim I would only keep them if I earned them. I'm out of the service, so how am I going to earn them?"

Little did Dye know that she would receive the call that she had been waiting for the past seven years. After applying for a rigger job on an Internet job service site, a recruiter called her. Working with the recruiter, she re-embarked on her journey to keep that airborne promise.

"I'm not joining the Army again unless I can go to Airborne School," said Dye. "I gave you guys eight years, but I won't join unless you can give me something that guarantees Airborne School. They then told me I could be a parachute rigger and that would guarantee Airborne School."

When signing up again for the Army Reserve as a parachute rigger, Dye took a reduction in rank and became a specialist for an entire year in order to attend Airborne School at Fort Benning and the Parachute Rigger course at Fort Lee, Va. Regulations prohibited her from re-classing to a rigger as a non-commissioned officer.

"...I am finally here, I'm living my dream, and I am keeping this promise."
—SGT Amy Dye

"I had been out of the Army a year and hadn't done any major physical training," said Dye. "I wasn't going to let that stop me, and I was determined to achieve this goal. It was a tough three weeks."

"Every week I was like, 'I am finally here, I'm living my dream, and I am keeping this promise,'" Dye said.

During those three weeks, Dye pushed herself through the rigorous training.

Finally, with her parents watching from the ground, Dye completed her fifth and final jump to earn her airborne wings Sept. 10, 2004.

"I was a little bummed that my uncle was unable to pin my wings on me," said Dye. "My father was there, and he had a picture of Uncle Jim pinned to his shirt. When dad pinned me with my uncle's wings that I had always carried with me from the day I accepted them from him, it was the proudest moment of my life and Army career. Those were the best three weeks of my life, and I knew my uncle would be proud of me if he was here."

"I was a little bummed that my uncle was unable to pin my wings on me."
—SGT Amy Dye

"I'm not sure I will ever make a promise again that's out of my control to keep," said Dye. "It was very difficult emotionally, and it's not like you can just sign up for Airborne School and go. To date, that was the best day of my life."

645TH AREA SUPPORT GROUP PREPARES SOLDIERS FOR BATTLE WITH LIVE FIRE TRAINING

By SPC Michael Weerts
Public Affairs Office
88th Regional Readiness Command

CAMP GRAYLING, Mich. — In the Global War on Terrorism, front lines have become nonexistent and supply lines are more vulnerable. Convoys come under attack everyday, and the enemy doesn't differentiate between Soldiers trained as infantrymen and those trained in other military occupational specialties —not that it matters, because every Soldier is a rifleman.

Army Reserve Soldiers receive mandatory convoy live-fire training at their mobilization stations before they are sent into theater, but the 645th Area Support Group (ASG), Whitehall, Ohio, staff felt once was not enough.

Leaders in the 645th ASG started planning in June 2005 to establish a training environment comparable to convoys in theater.

"It is the fundamental building block that is comparable to the experience Soldiers will have when in theater," said COL Harold 'Rocky' Ellens, 645th ASG commander. "The question we asked ourselves when we started planning this was, 'Is one time at a mob station enough experience (for Soldiers)?'"

The planning emerged as convoy live fire training ranges were built in October and activated at Camp Grayling, Mich. to give Soldiers familiarity with shooting out of a Humvee while traveling at moderate to high speeds. Ellens said the more Soldiers are exposed to that type of environment, the more they will be able to use the skills taught during training.

"In our eyes, you can't have enough training," said Ellens. "Our biggest concern is safety. Soldiers must go through a process of pre-training drills before running the course with live rounds."

The course runs 9.9 miles with targets on both sides of the trail, and wooden clones of vehicles, camels, and Iraqi people dressed in authentic clothing. Speakers blasting Arabic music and signs written in Arabic are prevalent throughout the course, giving it a real-life atmosphere.

Soldiers crouch in the back of Humvees during the course, with two Soldiers on the right (A-team), and two Soldiers on the left (B-team). When targets appear, the Observer Controller (OC) brings them to the shooters' attention. "Team A, lock and load and prepare to fire," they yell, while holding their Soldier atten-

tion-getter stick to make sure that muzzle awareness is followed and the mission is executed as safely and properly as possible.

"After being in Iraq and experiencing attacks on a convoy, this training brought back a lot of memories and it became surreal," said SSG Troy Eisenbach, an OC on the range and an Operation Iraqi Freedom Veteran.

"Because we are dealing with live ammo, the risk assessment is always high for this kind of training," Eisenbach said. "The OCs had the proper training for safety, and we put people in the right place so we could control any safety issues."

Team A and team B alternate shooting, unloading two 20-round magazines each. The focus is to keep their M16 pointed downrange.

"We aren't focused on accuracy. We want to make sure they get bullets at the enemy so the enemy keeps their head down and is unable to fire back at the convoy," said Eisenbach.

The 645th ASG took Soldiers who have experienced attacks in Iraq and put them through a thorough screening process. The best of the best were selected to conduct training for Soldiers.

"We brought combat veteran Soldiers who have experienced these types of situations in Iraq," Ellens said. "We want them to talk about different situations and who to turn to when help is needed."

"Convoys are where we lose lives," Ellens added. "This training provides confidence to the Soldiers and gets them familiar with the M16."

The OCs are put through the same extensive training they stress to the Soldiers being trained.

"When the OCs were trained, the emphasis was put on muzzle awareness and on when to shoot and when not to shoot situations," said 645th ASG CSM Lawrence May.

Ellens said that Army Reserve Soldiers normally do not handle weapons enough to have full confidence and feel comfortable with them.

"We want to give the Soldier confidence," Ellens explained. "We can't train for anything when we don't know what is going to happen, but with extra training, and by establishing a Soldier's confidence, hopefully they will be able to react and execute the mission."

Before Soldiers go through the live fire exercises, they do a walk through, a dry fire and a blank fire.

"Safety is our number one concern, but we want to make sure that quality is there as well as the safety," Ellens said. "Soldiering is a dangerous job and the risk assessment for training is often times high."

The Soldiers' response to the training has been positive.

"Soldiers want to be tested and all of these Soldiers who have run the course brought a serious attitude, and we got a great response," said May.

"We have very limited time, and training is everything" May added. "We can't waste a minute. We owe it to the Soldiers who put their lives on the line for their country to give them the right amount of training and the right quality. Soldiers want to do hard training. At the end of the day, they are exhausted, but they are smiling."

Soldiers scan their lane while going through a village on the convoy live fire course.

PHOTO: SPC MICHAEL WEERTS

UNC-W RECOGNIZES STUDENT VETERANS

By Tyronne Rowell
Army Reserve Ambassador for North Carolina

WILMINGTON, N.C. — Faculty and staff members of the University of North Carolina at Wilmington held a special campus reception in August 2005, for its students who are military veterans or Troop Program Unit (TPU) Soldiers. The reception was hosted and attended by Chancellor Rosemary DePaolo and senior staff who are current or retired military personnel.

"We wanted to acknowledge the commitment of time and the dedication of these student veterans and Army Reserve Soldiers," said Vice Chancellor Steve Demski, who also serves as a colonel in the Army Reserve. "Being a university student is stressful enough but when you add the challenge of making weekend drills and facing periodic activations it is important that they know their university supports each and everyone of our Citizen-Soldiers" said Demski.

The University of North Carolina at Wilmington has a number of retired, active duty or TPU Soldiers among its senior administrative staff and they wanted to be the first ones to welcome these students back to the campus for fall classes.

Members of the local community also joined the reception to thank the student veterans and Army Reserve Soldiers. Guests represented all branches of the service including veterans of World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War and Desert Storm. The community was pleased to see the university recognize student veterans.

(Editor's note: Tyrone Rowell is an assistant to the Chancellor at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington and a retired Army Reserve Soldier. He explained the Welcome Home Warrior-Citizen recognition program and displayed the items being given to each returning Army Reserve Soldier.)

PHOTO COURTESY TYRONNE ROWELL

Tyrone Rowell, U. S. Army Reserve Ambassador for North Carolina, discusses the Welcome Home Warrior Recognition program at a reception sponsored by the University of North Carolina at Wilmington to honor its student veterans and Reserve Soldiers.

PHOTO COURTESY 1SG RUSS CHRISTIANA

1SG Russ Christiana and an Afghan friend display a Pittsburgh Steelers banner in Afghanistan.

SOLDIERS SHOW PRIDE FOR SUPER BOWL STEELERS LOCALLY AND ABROAD

By Jack Gordon
Public Affairs Office
99th Regional Readiness Command

CORAOPOLIS, Pa. — Since the 99th Regional Readiness Command's (RRC) headquarters is located about 14 miles west of Pittsburgh and the home of the 2006 National Football Conference Champion Pittsburgh Steelers, and Heinz Field, Soldiers and civilian staff showed a little local Steeler pride before Super Bowl XL. The Steelers were pitted against the Seattle Seahawks Feb. 5, 2006, in Detroit, Mich.

Before the game at the headquarters, Soldiers and civilians held a "tailgate party" luncheon to show support for the Steelers' championship team and their Super Bowl appearance. Tickets to the luncheon sold like Iron City beer at a Steeler's game and trays of tailgate staples were served to about 200 Soldiers and civilian staff who attended the party. On the menu were pork and beans, hot dogs smothered with mustard, onion and sauerkraut, and foot-long kielbasa on a roll. Even the desert cake was decorated in support of the Steelers' black and gold colors.

Abroad, in the Middle East, 1SG Russ Christiana and an Afghan friend and fellow Steelers' fan displayed a Steelers banner at Forward Operating Base Salerno, near Bagram, Afghanistan, the week before the Super Bowl. Christiania, who was cross-leveled from the 99th RRC Headquarters, is serving with the 413th Postal Company in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

While in Muzerfrabad, Pakistan, MAJ Dave Gallo, also mobilized from the 99th RRC headquarters and assigned as a military attaché to the U.S. embassy there, displayed his "Terrible Towel" with another Pittsburgh Steeler fan at the 212th Mobile Army Surgical Hospital. Gallo said, "Steeler fans are easily recognizable… they're all sporting their black and gold towels.

Although all the 99th Steeler fans couldn't get together in Detroit, their spirits were definitely high and they were smiling for a long time after the outcome: Pittsburgh 21, Seattle 10.

APACHE UNIT'S SUCCESS HELPS SHAPE FUTURE OF IRAQ

By SFC Ken Petzold
372nd Public Affairs Detachment

FORT KNOX, Ky. — Everything a Soldier does should be to the best of his or her ability. But, the Soldiers of the 8th Battalion, 229th Aviation Regiment headquartered at Fort Knox, Ky., have proven with their hundreds of hours of incident free missions that they took great pride in accomplishing their mission during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The 8th Bn., 229th Avn. Regt. used these standards to help them produce some impressive statistics. While serving in Iraq from January 5 through October 10, 2005 the 8th Bn., 229th Avn. Regt. logged more than 13,100 combat flight hours in their AH-64 Apache helicopters. This is the equivalent of the number of hours flown in five years while in a non-deployed status. The many hours were divided into more than 1,800 separate combat missions.

During January, the unit provided aerial security of polling sites and ballot movement during the first national Iraq election in more than 50 years. They helped to provide validity and legitimacy to this historic election.

"Out of the 10 months we were in country, we flew every day but four. We couldn't fly those days because of weather," said LTC Roy Hall, commander of the 8th Bn., 229th Avn. Regt. Hall praised his pilots and maintenance crews for working 12 to 14-hour shifts 24 hours a day, seven days a week. "There were no vacations or holidays there in Iraq," said Hall.

The 1,800 combat missions provided daily reconnaissance and security of convoys, raids and patrols on the ground. One mission involved courage, wisdom and battle-hardened execution. During this mission, two of the Apache helicopters from the Kentucky unit were on patrol in the heart of the Sunni Triangle. They were called to assist an Army patrol that had come under fire from a building that was across the street from a mosque with a collapsed roof. The Apache helicopter crews were guided in by the attacked ground troops so the pilots could fire their Hellfire missiles. With surgical accuracy, the 8th Bn., 229th Avn. Regt. pilots eliminated the enemy forces without causing damage to surrounding homes or the historic mosque, according to Hall.

The pilots were not the only Soldiers to make the mission a success. The crew chiefs and maintenance personnel worked around-the-clock to insure their aircraft would be ready to answer any call. The ability of these professionals to do their job well resulted in no mechanically-related incidents during the thousands of combat flight hours.

SGT Raymond Sohl, an AH-64 Apache crew chief for the 8th Bn., 229th Avn. Regt. said that the aircraft maintainers knew that the lives of the pilots depended on their care of the Apaches. They were not about to take short cuts with the lives of their brothers-in-arms.

Fuel handlers were another important part of the team to keep the Apaches in the air. Hall gave great praise to those who refueled the aircraft. "They pumped over 1.5 million gallons of JP8 fuel without accident or incident," he said.

Another unnoticed but essential part of the 8th Bn., 229th Avn. Regt. team was the Headquarters and Headquarters Company (HHC). Hall credited a portion of the success of the maintainers to HHC. According to Hall, the HHC, while doing their assigned missions, also fulfilled most of the guard duty and completed most of the taskings that came down from higher headquarters so that the maintainers could stay focused on the job of keeping the aircraft in the air. The Army value of selfless service was seen everyday in the actions and attitudes of the aviation unit.

Historians will look back at the 2005 democratic elections and referendums held in Iraq as a dramatic change for the country. But the men and women of the 8th Bn., 229th Avn. Regt. will know that their high standards and accomplished missions, helped shape the future of Iraq and its people. ARM

PHOTO: U.S. ARMY

CW4 Tom Baker, left and CPT Andrew Cecil prepare for a VIP escort mission at the Washington helipad in Baghdad.

People

LAWKOWSKI SELECTED FOR NEWLY CREATED SES POSITION

By Chuck Prichard
Army Reserve Public Affairs

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Army Reserve leaders have selected an experienced government employee to fill a newly created senior executive service (SES) position to help lead the Army Reserve during a period of unprecedented change.

When John Lawkowski reported to work Feb. 21, 2006 as the Army Reserve's director of resource management (DRM), he became the highest ranking civilian employee in the Office of the Chief Army Reserve (OCAR)/Commander, U.S. Army Reserve Command (USARC) and the second SES employee of the Army Reserve.

Lawkowski, a veteran of almost three decades of government service, manages a budget of more than $6 billion. He reports directly to the Chief, Army Reserve, LTG Jack C. Stultz.

The SES position was created as part of the Army Reserve's restructuring effort. In the past, a military officer in the rank of colonel served as the organization's top fiscal manager. As the Army Reserve changes from a technically focused, force-in-reserve to an organization providing trained, ready, responsive forces integrated with the active component forces worldwide, it was evident to Army Reserve leaders that an executive-level civilian manager would provide stronger continuity than a military officer position and that an executive level resource manager was needed to integrate the previously separated resource management organizations of the OCAR and USARC. This action will streamline Army Reserve resource management functions, reduce overlap, and improve Army Reserve stewardship and accountability of financial resources.

PHOTO: U.S. ARMY

John Lawkowski, Army Reserve Director of Resource Management

Before being selected for the new DRM position, Lawkowski was the executive director for business at the U.S. Army Materiel Command, headquartered at Fort Belvoir, Va. Lawkowski's career in federal service began in September 1976 working as an auditor for the Defense Contract Audit Agency at the Sperry Rand Resident Office in New York. In 1979 he moved to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Washington, DC. His government career of 29 years spans all areas of the budget resource management career field, including 14 years in a variety of assignments at the Pentagon.

Lawkowski is a 1976 graduate of State University of New York at Buffalo, where he earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Accounting/Management. He also completed a Masters Degree in Public Financial Management from the American University in 1982. In 1996, Lawkowski graduated from the Industrial College of the Armed Forces receiving a Masters Degree in National Resource Strategy.

Lawkowski, a veteran of almost three decades of government service, manages a budget of more than $6 billion.

FORT DIX EMPLOYEE HONORED FOR 60 YEARS OF SERVICE

By Carolee Nisbet
Public Affairs Office
Fort Dix, N.J.

FORT DIX, N.J. — "Those 60 years went by before I knew it."

More than six decades of service to the United States of America may have zipped by for Steve Whitmore, operations officer for the Directorate of Public Works (DPW) at Fort Dix, N.J., but the command and the community slowed everything down at two special events to honor him for his remarkable career. To the amazement of many, neither of the events was a retirement ceremony.

Whitmore processed out of the Army at Fort Dix in 1946. Within weeks, he had a 1939 robin's egg-blue Chevrolet, a room in the neighboring town of Mount Holly, N.J. and a job as an electrician on post.

"My mother wasn't happy that I was leaving New York," he said. "But I told her I was too used to being in the country and couldn't live there anymore."

The rural beauty of Fort Dix suited him, and so he stayed, through 11 presidents, four wars, three rounds of BRAC and one mission: Provide the best place to train America's Soldiers.

"I think he built Fort Dix," said COL R. Dave McNeil, installation commander. "Most of these buildings weren't here when he first came to work."

Through time, skill and dedication, Whitmore became the expert on Fort Dix. Friends, co-workers and Diane Devens, director, Northeast Region Office, Army Installation Management Agency, gathered Oct. 17, 2005 at Wurman Hall to present Whitmore with official proof of his length of service — a brass and oak plaque proclaiming his 60 years of service.

There was much more to come. As the guest of honor at the Fort Dix

Installation Dining In, Whitmore was recognized for his long and illustrious service.

First on the agenda was a short video of his latest adventure-skydiving at a local airfield.

"Steve Whitmore embodies those military values we hold so dear as Soldiers in the United States Army," McNeil said in introducing him to the assembled crowd. "He is always a friend, always ready to help out."

Among the many awards presented to Whitmore were an accounting of his service read into the Congressional Record by Rep Jim Saxton (R-N.J.); letters of congratulation and appreciation from First Army commander, LTG Russell Honore and U.S. Army Chief of Staff GEN Peter J. Schoomaker; the Burlington County Medal for Military Service, and the Department of Army Meritorious Civilian Service Medal. McNeil also presented Whitmore with a framed double panoramic photo of Fort Dix depicting the view in 1945 and 2005.

"Every day in this job is a challenge," Whitmore told the audience. "And you do the best you can do. When we started out here, we had one substation. Now we have six-we never want to be without power. Whatever we do, we try to make it better. It's been a very interesting job, something always happens!"

Whitmore started his DPW life as an electrician and quickly moved to foreman of the electrical shop. During his long and distinguished career at DPW, he also has been the Chief of the Operations and Maintenance Division and Chief of the Public Works Division.

Whitmore's impact on the facilities and infrastructure of Fort Dix has been enormous. The majority of the buildings in use on Fort Dix-almost 90 percent-were built after he arrived in 1945.

All of the utility systems on Fort Dix were either installed or expanded under Whitmore's guidance. The current electrical grid system for the Installation is one that he designed and either helped construct with a crew of high tension electricians, or oversaw the construction in a supervisory capacity. The system he designed continues to impress the utility company which now has the responsibility for its repair and maintenance.

PHOTO: COURTESY FORT DIX, N.J. PAO

Steve Whitmore, operations officer, Fort Dix, N.J., Directorate of Public Works

Whitmore continues to provide the oversight for all utility services. His knowledge of the systems is legendary as is his ability to troubleshoot and quickly correct all system problems. He is currently the technical and management expert in all DPW areas of responsibility, from cutting the many acres of grass to guiding privatization of the utility systems. He is the principle point of contact on a 24/7 basis for resolution of all engineer emergencies.

As the current DPW Operations Officer, his responsibilities also include a broad range of consulting work on all new construction as well as the repair and maintenance of existing facilities. He also fills the role of the director when the director is not available.

FORMER ARMY RESERVE CHIEFS GATHER FOR HISTORIC CONFERENCE

By Dennis Hatcher
Public Affairs Office
Army Reserve Medical Command

PINELLAS PARK, Fla. — Six former Chiefs of the Army Reserve gathered for an historical event in January 2006. Hosted by the previous chief, LTG James R. Helmly, the unprecedented meeting of past and present leaders was held at the Army Reserve Medical Command headquarters in Pinellas Park, Fla. Historically, this many former chiefs have never before gathered together.

Helmly's purpose for bringing the former chiefs together was to brief them on the rapid changes to, and modernization of, the Army Reserve's mission as a direct result of the terrorist attacks in September 2001.

> ...(The former chiefs) saw first hand how the Army Reserve of today is not the Reserve they knew and commanded.

Retired chiefs, MG William Berkman, 78, (1979-86); BG Harry Mott III, 77, (1986); MG William Ward, Jr., 78, (1986-91); MG Roger Sandler, 71, (1991-94); MG Max Baratz, 71, (1994-98); and LTG Thomas Plewes, 65, (1998-2002), along with their host and staff members, attended an informal dinner featuring Rep. C.W. Bill Young (R-FL) as the guest speaker.

After attending a series of classified briefings, the former chiefs expressed their admiration and awe of the modern Reserve forces and saw first hand how the Army Reserve of today is not the Reserve they knew and commanded.

Helmly expressed his confidence that the former Chiefs will use their new understanding to positively influence Army Reserve issues now before Congress and the public eye.

> ...The former chiefs will use their new understanding to positively influence Army Reserve issues...

At the conclusion of the conference, each of the chiefs was presented with a personalized copy of the historical volume, *Chiefs of the Army Reserve, Biographical Sketches of the United States Army Reserve's Senior Officers*.

RESERVE OFFICER SERVES WEST POINT AS LIAISON

By Jennifer Downing
Public Affairs Intern
United States Military Academy

One Army Reserve officer who has devoted his life to his country, both in the civilian sector and as one of America's bravest, currently gives back to the Army's premiere military school, the United States Military Academy in West Point, N.Y., as a liaison officer. Not only does he devote his time to helping choose the Army's future second lieutenants — he does it for free.

COL Walter Rant serves as a Military Academy Liaison Officer (MALO) for West Point. Like 230 other MALOs, Rant is tasked with the important job of helping future cadets get through the admissions process while also serving as a mentor once they arrive at the academy.

"I love being around younger people and making a difference in their lives and showing them what my profession offers them," said Rant.
The New Jersey resident currently works as a special agent for the FBI and is only allowed to be on stand-by reserve because of his profession.

Before taking a job with the FBI, Rant was on active duty in the Army for 12 years and served in various capacities including a tank company commander,

Former Chiefs of the Army Reserve, left to right, MG William Berkman, BG Harry Mott III, MG William Ward, Jr., MG Roger Sandler, MG Max Baratz, and LTG Thomas Plewes, join the previous Chief of the Army Reserve, LTG James R. Helmly, far right, for a historic conference in Pinellas Park, Fla.

PHOTO: DENNIS HATCHER

ROTC instructor and an armor battalion commander. He was also assigned to several installations such as Fort Bragg, Fort Knox and Fort Benning and has spent time in Germany and finally West Point.

While at Villanova University Rant learned of the MALO program at West Point. Although he is not a West Point graduate, the MALO program was of interest to him because it provided him the opportunity to continue to serve his nation and help shape tomorrow's leaders.

"It is a chance to give something back to the Army," he said. "You have a chance of affecting the future leadership of the United States Army."

The admissions committee at the academy looks for compatibility within the three pillars of excellence to include their military, academic and physical potential. MALOs play a critical role in the process by conducting the admissions interviews and seeing if the candidates have the ability to stand up, take charge and be a leader like many prestigious West Point alumni of the past.

"It is a chance to give something back to the Army."
—COL Walter Rant

Technically, only reserve officers can hold the position of a MALO, although others can volunteer to help disseminate information about the academy to cadet recruits and serve as a valuable member of the admissions team as an admissions participant.

As a MALO, Rant completed a training process including the completion of an online tutorial, shadowing a current liaison officer for a year and attending the annual MALO conference at the academy. During the training period, liaison candidates have the opportunity to learn more about admissions procedures, sit in on classes and meet with Academy leadership.

While MALOs are not paid, they do earn points towards retirement, the opportunity to develop relationships with cadets and the unique opportunity to assist in shaping the future of the Army for years to come.
The special agent and father of six, Rant reaches out to interested candidates in the Monmouth county area in New Jersey. Typically, MALOs are assigned to a congressional district where they live.

Since becoming a MALO in 1995, Rant has developed relationships with cadets he has sponsored and now handles the annual MALO Conference and the Summer Leadership Seminar held at West Point.

"The seminar is a success because nearly half of the quality high school candidates who attend the week-long seminar are admitted into the academy the following year," he said.

Because many potential cadets and their parents can't always come to West Point for a tour or to speak with an admissions officer, the MALO is a great way to reach those teenagers.

"It is important for knowledgeable officers to go out and relay information so candidates can make a good decision about whether the academy is for them," said Rant. "MALOs are armed with the latest and greatest information."

As for the future, Rant sees himself giving back to this country for a long time to come, even after his planned retirement in three years.

What drives MALOs like Rant is pride in their country, "and a little selfishness," he said. "I want my profession to have the best men and women that come out of here as new lieutenants and into the Army. They are just as good as those who came before them."

"MALOs are armed with the latest and greatest information."
—COL Walter Rant

After 26 years of service between active, reserve and stand-by duty, he hopes to continue the Long Gray Line of duty, honor and country that the Academy instills in tomorrow's leaders.

(Editor's note: Major Shelly Jackson is the media officer for the Directorate of Admissions at West Point. For further information on the MALO program she may be reached toll-free at 800-822-2769 ext. 5701; commercial 845-938-570). ARM

COL Walter Rant, liaison officer, United States Military Academy

PHOTO: COURTESY UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY

Around the Globe

U.S. ARMY EUROPE LEADERS HONOR SACRIFICE OF RETURNING WARRIOR CITIZENS

By SFC Derrick Witherspoon
Public Affairs Office
7th Army Reserve Command

SCHWETZINGEN, Germany — With frequent deployments and redeployments, U.S. Army Europe (USAREUR) leaders visited the 7th Army Reserve Command (ARCOM) in January 2006 to personally thank the returning Soldiers and their family members, and to gain insight on their deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

LTG Ricardo S. Sanchez, former acting deputy commanding general, USAREUR, and MG David P. Valcourt, chief of staff, USAREUR, paid surprise visits to Army Reserve Soldiers returning from a year in Afghanistan.

Sanchez, who is also the commander of V Corps, said part of his reason for visiting the Army Reserve Soldiers was to ensure they were being provided with the same resources as their active duty counterparts during their redeployment process.

"We, as the active component, place a lot of emphasis on lining up all of the resources to take care of regular Army units in the first seven to 10 days of their redeployment," said Sanchez. "We need to ensure that the same thing is taking place for the Reserve component Soldiers, because they've got a shorter timeline and a civilian job to return to."

Sanchez said they need to ensure that the first priorities that are placed on support of the active component are the same priorities placed on providing exceptional support for Reserve component Soldiers.

The need for exceptional support from the active component can be seen through the number of deployments the 7th ARCOM has had as it supported, and still supports, USAREUR in the Global War on Terrorism. The 7th ARCOM has mobilized and deployed all of its 23 Army Reserve units in support of various military operations over the past few years. The support of the 7th ARCOM headquarters and the active component has been essential in making the deployment and redeployment process go smoothly for Army Reserve Soldiers and their family members.

LTG Ricardo S. Sanchez (right), former acting deputy commanding general, USAREUR, and commander, V Corps, talks to SSG Francisco E. Garza, a 7th Army Reserve Command (ARCOM) Soldier, about his recent deployment to Afghanistan.

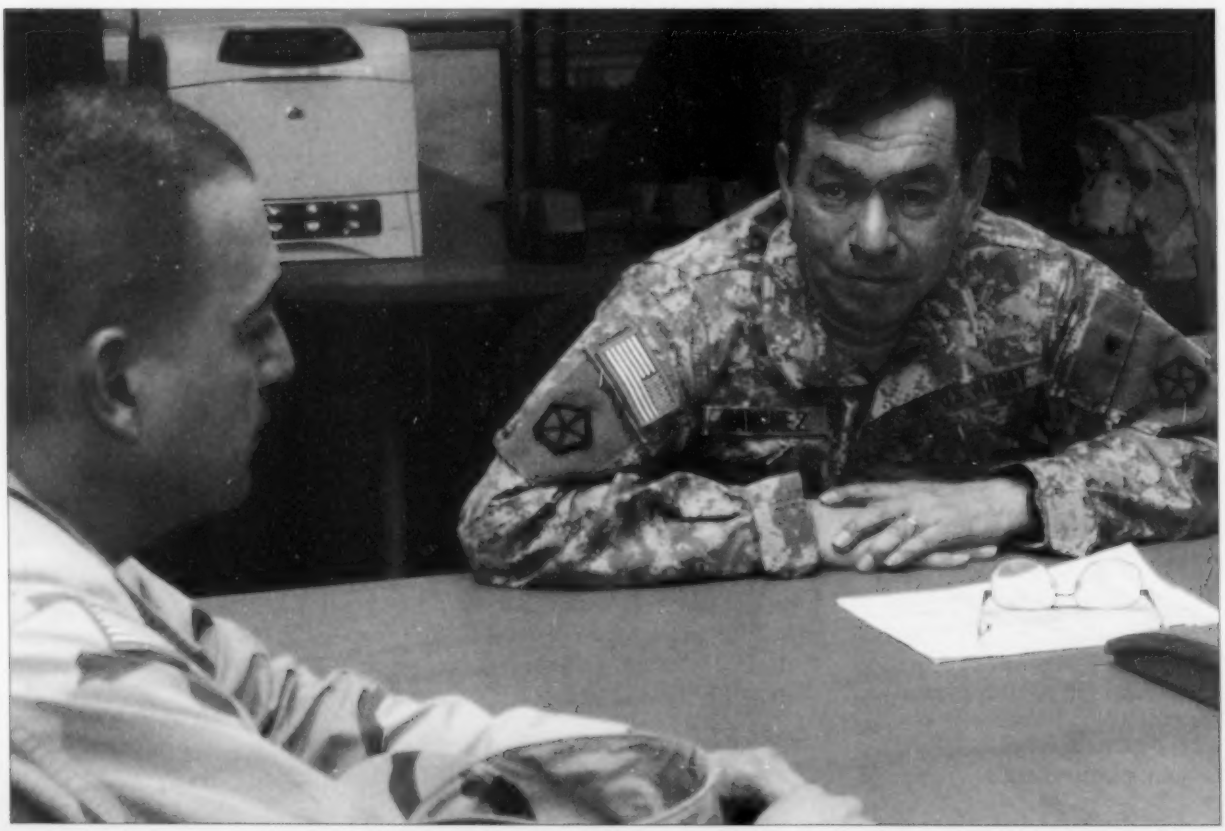

PHOTO: MAJ MICHAEL HUTH

SGT Tiffany R. Dewis, an Army Reserve Soldier who recently redeployed from Afghanistan, said she was more than pleased with the redeployment support provided by the 7th ARCOM. Dewis and her fellow comrades said they were surprised and very impressed with the Welcome Home Warrior-Citizen ceremony provided by the 7th ARCOM in their honor.

Valcourt, a speaker during the Welcome Home Warrior-Citizen ceremony, stressed his gratitude not only to the Soldiers, but also to their families.

"I'm active duty and I expect to get deployed and my family expects the same," said Valcourt to the audience, "but now you see that Army Reserve Soldiers and families must also expect deployments at any time."

Valcourt said the load that family members of deployed Soldiers bear helps maintain the focus of Soldiers as they accomplish their missions during military operations. He also made it known that family members should consider themselves as much heroes as the Soldiers supporting the Global War on Terrorism.

SGT Leonard T. Williamson, an Army Reserve Soldier who recently returned from Afghanistan, said he really appreciated the concern shown by the generals.

"They just came in interested in seeing what our problems were and getting things fixed as much as possible," Williamson said.

After the generals' visits and conversations with the Army Reserve Soldiers, many of the Soldiers said that they have more of an assurance that the issues they had during their deployment will be addressed. The Soldiers said they were thankful for the praise given to them by the generals, but they are even more thankful that other Army Reserve Soldiers may not have to endure some of the challenges they faced during their deployment.

ARMY RESERVE SOLDIER MAKES 2006 U.S. ARMED FORCES CYCLING TEAM

By SFC Derrick Witherspoon
Public Affairs Office
7th Army Reserve Command

SCHWETZINGEN, Germany — Some people think that joining the military means giving up lifelong dreams such as being a professional singer, basketball player, Olympian or cyclist, but if you ask Army Reserve SSG Michael J. Gallagher, he would tell you it is only the beginning of achieving your dreams.

Gallagher, a former computer specialist with the Schwetzingen based Headquarters, 7th Army Reserve Command (ARCOM), turned his dream of being a professional cyclist into a reality, becoming the first — and only — Army Reserve Soldier to capture a spot on the U.S. Armed Forces Cycling Team (AFCT). Gallagher was selected in February to be a member of the elite 2006 U.S. AFCT. He also recently competed in the U.S. National Cyclocross Championships against approximately 160 professional and elite cyclocross riders and came in 11th place — an accomplishment that he trained for months to achieve.

Formally competing as a mountain biker, Gallagher said he had no idea he could become a professional cyclist in the military, until he heard about the U.S. AFCT.

"I was told that I needed to concentrate on road cycling and transition from mountain biking, which, at that time, was my main focus," said Gallagher. "The AFCT manager told me that road cycling was the best supported cycling sport in the military. This way I would get the support to go farther in my cycling career and represent the military at the same time."

Gallagher said in preparation for joining the AFCT he took some medical sports tests that revealed his genetic disposition for endurance sports. The main test was the V02 max test, which informs a person of their maximum oxygen consumption and heart rate during levels of high intensity exercise. Gallagher tested in the 75th percentile.

"The elite professional level cyclists, cross country runners, and skiers start out at around 65 percent, so I realized that I had the correct equipment, I just needed to find out how to use it correctly," said Gallagher.

Giving Gallagher a hand with his training and his cycling career with the AFCT was his coach, Klaus Wolf — the official coach of the U.S. Armed Forces Cycling Team. After seeing Gallagher in several races in Germany, Wolf said he was eager to talk to him about joining the AFCT.

> "He trains so hard that I'm always working to make sure he doesn't over train."
> —Klaus Wolf

"Michael is the type of cyclist who is always motivated and more of an athlete who likes to push his training," said Wolf. "He trains so hard that I'm always working to make sure he doesn't over train."

Wolf said Gallagher is a natural talent with the potential to achieve even more than he already has.

"To be a member of the Armed Forces Cycling Team requires a great deal of dedication and self-discipline," said Debra Ponzio, manager, U.S. Armed Forces Cycling. "Cyclists start at category five and through their competitive results, work their way to category one — the level just below professional. All of our team members, including SSG Gallagher, are category one cyclists."

Ponzio said that most of the athletes the team competes against earn their living

as professional cyclists — unlike the members of the armed forces who also have their military careers to focus on.

"SSG Gallagher competes in road races throughout the summer both in the United States and Europe," said Ponzio. "He has represented the United States in the Military World Championships in road cycling for the past two years. He is our only armed forces athlete who also specializes in cyclocross."

Ponzio added that Gallagher has worked his way up the cyclocross rankings to reach his current standing among the best in the United States. His recent selection to represent the United States in World Cup events means that he's at the start of the next level — racing among the world's best. She also expects him to move up in the rankings once he begins racing among the best cyclists in the world.

Gallagher said that although he loves cycling, as an Army Reserve Soldier he never places it before his Army Reserve mission.

"He has represented the United States in the Military World Championships in road cycling for the past two years."
—Debra Ponzio

"I have been supported quite well by many people in the military," said Gallagher. "When I was mobilized at the 7th ARCOM, I didn't get to train during the work day, but I did let my section know my training plan and they worked with me. I usually worked during lunch so I could use that hour to ride when I left work. One thing that is for sure is that regardless of what is going on with my cycling, I'm a Soldier first, so I have to make sure that my military job is never negatively impacted."

"I'm a Soldier first, so I have to make sure that my military job is never negatively impacted."
—SSG Michael Gallagher

Now that Gallagher has moved back to the United States, he said he is glad that he was chosen to remain a member of the Armed Forces Cycling Team. Gallagher added that one thing is certain — joining the military has truly helped him achieve his wildest dream. ARM

SSG Michael J. Gallagher, an Army Reserve Soldier and member of the U.S. Armed Forces Cycling Team, races to the finish line during the U.S. Cyclocross National Championships held in Portland, Ore. in December 2005.

PHOTO: BRIAN ZECK

EMPLOYERS DEMONSTRATE SUPPORT FOR NATIONAL GUARD AND RESERVE

By MAJ Rob Palmer, USAFR
Chief, Strategic Communications
National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve

As an Army Reserve Soldier, you probably know that your civilian job is protected by federal law when you are required to perform military service. You might have asked yourself, "Sure, my employment is protected, but what does my boss think about my military service?"

Some employers are making it very clear… they're behind your military service 100 percent.

On June 28, 2006, Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao and Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Dr. David S. C. Chu praised the federal government's commitment to serve as a "model employer" for members of the National Guard and Reserve. Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR), obtained signed statements of support from all independent federal agencies as well as the entire President's Cabinet. A special over-sized Cabinet statement of support document, signed by all 16 Cabinet secretaries, is the first known single document signed by an entire Presidential Cabinet in support of the National Guard and Reserve.

"America's servicemembers who sacrifice so much for all of us, deserve the support of employers in returning to civilian life and careers, or in looking for new opportunities," Chao said. "Supportive employers are critical to maintaining the strength and readiness of the nation's National Guard and Reserve units, and in tapping the immense potential of our veterans. To this end, I am happy to say the federal government has proven to be a model employer."

Private sector employers are also demonstrating strong support for their employees who serve in the National Guard and Reserve.

Each year, the Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Awards, the Department of Defense's highest honor for employer support, are awarded to as many as 15 employers who go "above and beyond" the requirements of federal law to support their employees. Many recognizable firms like Wal-Mart, Toyota, Miller Brewing Company and Harley-Davidson are past recipients of the Freedom Award, as well as some smaller companies like Charlotte-based D.H. Griffin Wrecking Company and Colt Safety Fire & Rescue in St. Louis. State and local government employers including the State of Minnesota, the City of Bedford, Va., and the Los Angeles Police Department have received Freedom Awards.

In recent testimony before the Senate Subcommittee on Employment and Workplace Safety, Dennis Donovan, The Home Depot's executive vice president for human resources, explained why supporting the National Guard and Reserve is important to his company.

> **"It is in our value proposition to take care of the people who are defending our country."**
>
> **—Dennis Donovan**

"It is in our value proposition to take care of the people who are defending our country," Donovan told the committee. "We do not view our military support as a cost, but rather as an investment. It is not a burden. It is our responsibility, and one that we live up to proudly each and every day." The Home Depot is a 2004 recipient of the Freedom Award.

For more information on the Freedom Awards and employers who support the National Guard and Reserve, visit **www.esgr.mil**. ARM

YOUR JOB IS ***PROTECTED!***

As a uniformed service member, you have rights under the Uniformed Services Employment & Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA).

Your Rights
- Military leave of absence
- Prompt reinstatement
- Accumulation of seniority
- Reinstatement of health insurance
- Training or retraining of skills
- Protection against discrimination

Your Requirements
- Provide prior notice to employer
- Serve under honorable conditions
- Return to work in accordance with USERRA guidelines (see back of card)

ESGR

Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve is a DoD agency established to gain and maintain active support from all public and private employers.

Reemployment Timetable Mar 05

To be eligible for protection under USERRA, you must report back to work or apply for reemployment within the following guidelines:

1-30 days of service	Report next scheduled work day
31-180 days of service	Apply within 14 days after completion of service
181+ days of service	Apply within 90 days after completion of service

ESGR *Programs and Services*

ESGR has numerous programs and services to assist service members including Employer Awards to recognize your employer and Ombudsman who can help you resolve employment related issues.

For more information, contact ESGR at: 1-800-336-4590 * www.esgr.mil

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

WARRIOR-CITIZENS: INTEGRAL TO THE FUTURE FORCE

U.S.ARMY

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